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ABSTRACT

The Families in Education Program, dedicated to nurturing a family-community-school partnership, provides this book for Wisconsin schools to use throughout the year to promote families and learning. The articles in this book contain ideas for developing and enhancing volunteer programs in the schools and for developing effective service learning opportunities for youth. Part 1, "Volunteers for Children's Learning," includes articles on: (1) starting a volunteer program; (2) designing and organizing a volunteer program; (3) developing volunteer job descriptions; (4) recognition programs for volunteers; (5) teacher's guides to using volunteers; (6) encouraging diversity in volunteers; (7) including migrant families in volunteer efforts; (8) planning an intergenerational program; (9) tips for tutors; (10) welcoming people with disabilities as volunteers; (11) reading volunteers; and (12) the use of mentoring. Part 2, "Youth Service-Learning Opportunities," focuses on service learning and includes articles on opportunities in Wisconsin, essential elements of service learning, tips for organizing youth service learning programs, and integrating service learning into the curriculum. An appendix includes sample forms. (KB)

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Learning Together

School Volunteer Guide

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Families • Schools • Communities

Learning Together

Spring 2000

School Volunteer Guide

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Foreword

Everyone can be a volunteer. Everyone's contributions count! Volunteers give heart-to-heart, from their own hearts directly to others. Wherever they are, whatever they do, volunteers make it better—the environment, a classroom, a person who needs someone to care. Volunteering is one of the best investments of time we can make to ensure a successful future for our children.

The needs and the opportunities for caring are so apparent in schools. The presence of parents and other community members can change the very culture of the school, making connections among families, generations, and neighborhoods. When community members volunteer for young people, they forge pathways of knowledge and compassion into the future, handing a lifetime of understanding to those who will inherit the future. Volunteers also gain a better understanding of the mission and challenges of the schools, the place where our young people learn and grow. Volunteers can make all the difference, whether they work one-on-one with students, lead small groups or provide assistance to teachers.

Youth service-learning programs that give students of all ages the chance to work with other students or on community projects also leave lasting impressions of the benefits of volunteering, the gift of self.

Use this resource to help start or enhance your volunteer program. This guide is organized into three sections:

- Part I: Volunteers for Children's Learning,
- Part II: Youth Service-Learning Opportunities, and
- Appendix.

Along the way, be sure to check out the Web sites listed at the end of each article that offer additional useful information.

There are many winners in volunteering. Begin today!

John T. Benson
State Superintendent

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Part 1

Volunteers for Children's Learning

How to Start a Volunteer Program

Design and Organization of a Volunteer Program

Sample Job Description for a Building-Level Volunteer Coordinator

Effective Practices: Focus on Volunteering

Survey of Parents on Volunteering

Developing a Good Volunteer Position Description

School Family Centers: A Place to Grow Volunteers

Expectations for Volunteers and Schools

School Board Policy on Volunteer Helpers *(Sample 1)*

Policy on School Volunteers *(Sample 2)*

Want to Keep School Volunteers? Recognize Them!

Certificate of Appreciation

School Volunteer Enrollment Form

A Teacher's Guide to Using School Volunteers

Teachers: Vital Links in the School Volunteer Program

Teacher Request for Volunteer Service

Reflecting Classroom Faces: Encouraging Diversity Among Volunteers

Including Migrant Families in School Volunteer Efforts

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Ideas for Involving Retired Persons in the Schools

Tips for Tutors

Tips for Welcoming People with Disabilities as School Volunteers

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Making Family Involvement a Priority with Reading Volunteers

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How to Start a Volunteer Program

First Steps

Examine Your Needs. How can school volunteers help? Ask parents for their ideas about the needs of their children and families. Do children need to improve reading skills with more personalized reading time? Could volunteers who have a second language help empower students of diverse backgrounds?

Investigate the Climate. Talk with teachers and other school staff about using volunteers. Parent volunteers have identified the following as the key factors to a successful collaboration between teachers and volunteers:

- flexibility,
- teacher and school openness to volunteers,
- a recognition and acceptance of role,
- taking some time to gauge the "culture of the school,"
- recognizing that being a volunteer means helping more than one's own child,
- patience,
- respect the children.

Talk to representatives of the groups you want to involve in the school volunteer program, both volunteers and users of volunteers. These include the school board, teachers, librarians, PTA, senior citizen groups, Chamber of Commerce, local service clubs, human service agencies, and local businesses. Community and business partnerships help support student learning.

Approach potential volunteers and their organizations. Collaboration will be a source of strength and growth, so get out there and network! Be specific about the kinds of support and the number of volunteers you need. Recruit community members as volunteers to help the community connect with schools.

Provide a brief article for the organization's newsletter and follow up your request with a letter of thanks.

Plan Goals and Organization

Select goals for your volunteer program that have specific, measurable objectives. Make sure to involve in the goal setting those staff who will work with volunteers. Tutoring needs to be intensive and consistent. Students need to be assessed regularly to help tutors tailor the lesson plans to meet the students' needs. Also determine how you will measure results of such goals as

- raising student achievement in reading and math,
- reducing absenteeism in high school,
- improving the community's attitudes toward the schools, and
- increasing community involvement in schools.

Get written school board support for the school volunteer program. This support gives the program added prestige in the community. The volunteer coordinator should make periodic reports to the school board.

Plan your program. To develop a successful program, start with a needs assessment, joint planning, shared responsibilities, and an atmosphere of trust among participants. Members of the network must be willing to share ideas and "give them away." If these elements are incorporated, the participants of your network will feel ownership of the program and will work hard to promote volunteer activities.

Suggestions for setting up an ongoing volunteer program include:

1. Conduct an inservice session explaining the concept to teachers and support staff.
2. At a later date, have teachers make written requests for specific volunteer assignments, stating times needed and job descriptions. Provide training to teachers about working with volunteers.
3. Form a working committee for each school or for the district as a whole. Include parents, retired persons, teachers, students, a principal, and community representatives. The committee will plan, recruit, publicize, and assist in implementing projects.
4. Appoint a staff volunteer coordinator for each school. The coordinator will take requests for work to be done from teachers and forward them to the school or will be responsible for recruiting volunteers.
5. Write a job description for the district-wide school volunteer coordinator, preferably a paid position. Job duties include:
   - interviewing and screening volunteer applicants,
   - coordinating the volunteer program within each individual school,
   - receiving the schools' requests for volunteer assistance.

Write job descriptions for all volunteer tasks. Teachers and librarians should list the kinds of help they want and at which hours of which days. Most volunteer tutors average about two hours of tutoring per week.

Check on policies and laws relating to volunteers. Can volunteers ride the school bus, receive insurance coverage, serve in their own child's classroom, bring preschool children along on days they work at school, or receive free school lunches?

Learn the health requirements for school volunteers, such as tubercular skin tests or chest x-rays.

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Arrange to have volunteers take the health test at one site or arrange for transportation to a health clinic.

Establish a system for recording volunteer hours and type of contributions. Use the data to tell the community of your program's achievements and degree of involvement.

Recruit and Keep Volunteers

Your school volunteer project is a partnership among parents, teachers and students, with support from school administration and the community. You will recruit parents, youth-service learning participants, college and university students, senior citizens and other community members. You will work with local media, businesses, churches, schools, community groups and non-profit organizations to promote and publicize your volunteer program efforts.

Positive word-of-mouth is still by far the most effective method of recruiting volunteers. Most volunteers are recruited by existing staff, clients, or volunteers. Make sure everyone you know is aware that you are trying to recruit.

The more specific your request is, the better your response will be. One of the biggest obstacles to parent involvement is parents' lack of time. Getting parents with busy schedules involved requires planning and flexibility.

Volunteer programs can target underserved parents, including those for whom English is a second language, those who feel intimidated by teachers, or those who simply wish they knew more about helping their children do well in school.

Some school volunteer programs produce their own leaflets and posters; some send letters to parents of students; and some place notices in the student and staff bulletins. Newspaper ads, fliers at community agencies, booths at Volunteer fairs, are all effective ways of recruitment. Place them in schools and colleges, libraries, town halls and other public buildings, religious centers, and shopping areas.

Public recognition of your volunteers also plays a major role. Local networks of diverse groups can provide an excellent resource for reaching out to parents.

Plan Recruitment Strategies

Recruiting parents: Parents make wonderful volunteers. Who else has a more direct interest in the education and well-being of children than their parents? If their schedule allows, many parents welcome the opportunity to get involved in their children's education. Alleviating barriers to parent involvement is the most important factor in recruiting parents. Their availability will vary based on schedules, transportation, and amount of time they can allocate to the program.

If your school is sensitive to the time pressures parents face, it will:

- Be flexible when parents want to volunteer
- Coordinate volunteer activities parents can do from home, such as preparing mailings and making phone calls.

Working parents who cannot volunteer on a weekly basis may want to help with short-term needs such as chaperoning a field trip, hosting a work site visit, assisting with a half-day service project.

Ask parents to recruit other parents to volunteer. Parent involvement specialists say that parents calling parents to the school is more effective than principals or other staff calling parents to the school.

Recruiting from the community: Find out where community agencies such as United Way and RSVP get volunteers and how and where other school volunteer programs recruit. Churches, senior centers, other organizations in your neighborhood may also be sources for volunteers. The Volunteer Center in your area can provide you with valuable information. The same information can be sent to your neighborhood newspaper. Volunteers can vary in age from kindergarten service-learning students to senior citizens participating in Foster Grandparent programs or the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).

The benefits of bringing businesses and communities into the schools are enormous. Some Wisconsin schools have formed partnerships with businesses and other organizations. Most partnerships include some level of employee volunteerism on a weekly basis or with short-term projects. Each partnership has a school liaison.

Recruiting fathers/men: Getting more men involved in volunteering in schools will be challenging and rewarding. Schools are great institutions for reaching many dads. Volunteering can have a positive impact in our schools by promoting father/male contact with their children at schools. Many educators are puzzled about how to get single parents, particularly fathers, more involved with their children's education. New research shows that there are some specific things schools can recommend to single parents that may lead them to become more involved with their children's schools. These include:

- Sharing activities with children
- Going on outings with children
- Telling children a story
- Talking about family history

Recruiting college students: Federal work-study students from local colleges and universities around the state can be an invaluable resource as tutors. Contact your local college, school of education, or technical college for ideas and assistance.

To recruit volunteers:

- Involve school parent-teacher organizations
- Send surveys of interest to parents
- Identify and contact all area volunteer centers
- Make an inventory of businesses and groups near the school and prepare an extensive listing of area organizations, groups, churches
- Use local resources of higher education institutions to highlight volunteering opportunities
- Make presentations at community organizations, such as service clubs and fraternal, social, and retired educators' groups
- Reach out to the public through the media and surveys.

Evaluate

Plan for a continuing evaluation of the program. Many of the results of a good school volunteer program cannot be measured, for example, the change in a child's attitude toward learning, improvement in a student's self-image, the warmth of the volunteer-child relationship. All participants should be asked to evaluate the program from their own point of view. Evaluation results should point out the strengths and weaknesses of the program.

Communicate

Types of communication include:

- Personal and phone contact between coordinators and other program staff members,
- Meetings for volunteers to discuss their service and learn about the program and other opportunities,
- A school volunteer newsletter or column in the school newsletter or community newspaper sent to all volunteers and program participants, and
- Information on the volunteer program in the annual report from the school board.

These suggestions are adapted from School Volunteer Program, *National Association of Partners in Education, 209 Madison Street, Suite 401, Alexandria, VA 22314. (703) 836-4880.*

For more information, visit the following websites:

- Every Parent a Volunteer: www.everyparent-volunteer.org
- National Congress of Parents and Teachers (National PTA): www.pta.org
- How to Make the Most of Volunteers in Your Classroom: www.cybervpm.com
- Information on the importance and benefits of volunteering by management expert Susan Ellis: www.serviceleader.org/advice/index.html
- San Francisco School Volunteers: www.sfsv.org

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Design and Organization of a Volunteer Program

(Sample)

The school district volunteer program is an organization of individuals who work in schools under the direction of principals, teachers, and other personnel to strengthen the school program and to enrich the learning experience of students.

The program is endorsed by the school board and the superintendent. Responsibility for organizing the program and establishing cooperative working arrangements with district staff rests with the district's coordinator of public information and volunteer program coordinator.

Responsibilities

Coordinator of Public Information

- Serves as liaison between individual schools and the public.
- Supervises the volunteer program coordinator.

Volunteer Program Coordinator

- Manages coordination between the central volunteer office and the schools.
- Recruits and supervises school volunteers.
- Trains and orients school volunteers.
- Promotes positive public relations between the schools and community.
- Evaluates the progress of the program (surveys, observation, periodic and year-end reports).

Principal

- Serves as supervisor of the volunteer program.
- Informs staff members of the program and enlists their support.
- Helps to identify the types of volunteer services needed by staff.
- Outlines specific school procedures volunteers should follow.
- Makes work space available to volunteers and provides access to lounge and restroom facilities.
- Meets with volunteers and staff to create team spirit.
- Helps to evaluate the services of volunteers.

Building Coordinator

- Works under the direction of the principal and in cooperation with the district volunteer coordinator.
- Processes requests for volunteer aid.
- Recruits and assigns volunteers.
- Keeps files and records of volunteer activities within the school.
- Confers with the principal and staff as necessary.
- Helps to make good use of volunteers.
- Checks with volunteers who miss time or are unable to fulfill a specific assignment as scheduled.
- Arranges for recognition of volunteers within the school.

Teachers

- Request and involve volunteers in the curriculum.
- Plan and direct the work of the volunteer.
- Notify the volunteer or volunteer coordinator if the volunteer will not be needed at the regular time.
- Release an unoccupied volunteer to help another teacher.
- Anticipate the information the volunteer will need to carry out assigned duties, i.e., where to find materials and how to set up an activity.
- Avoid assigning responsibilities beyond the volunteer's abilities.
- Expect the volunteer to be punctual, on task, and to accept direction from the teacher.

Volunteers

- Contribute and are responsible for maintaining a professional attitude of mutual respect and competence.
- Offer supportive and supplemental service under professional supervision and direction.
- Are punctual and reliable in fulfilling assignments and notifying the school in case of absence.
- Become familiar with school and classroom policies and practices.
- Are willing to adjust to the teacher's way of doing things and follow directions.
- Participate in information-sharing conferences and training as needed.

Using Community Resources and Recruiting Volunteers

Resource Areas

Recruit volunteers to help in these areas:

- Reading, math, and related subjects
- Students with exceptional needs
- Art, music, and physical education
- Occupations
- Special interests
- Special abilities
- Hobbies

Recruitment

To recruit volunteers:

- Involve school parent-teacher organizations
- Send surveys of interest to parents
- Make presentations at community organizations, such as service clubs and fraternal, social, and retired educators' groups
- Reach out to the public through media advertising and surveying

Orientation

General orientation of volunteers will cover these areas:

- Confidentiality
- District policies
- Discipline procedures

Training

Volunteers will be specifically trained to:

- conduct reading activities with students.
- tutor students, as directed by teachers.
- give special assistance to students with exceptional needs.

Evaluation

Through interviews, questionnaires, and informal conversations, the following areas should be evaluated:

- Program's success at meeting the needs of children and job market demands
- Effectiveness of the orientation/training sessions
- Effectiveness of program procedures
- General effectiveness of the program

Contributed by the Janesville Public Schools, Janesville, WI

Sample Job Description

for a Building-Level Volunteer Coordinator

Job Goal/Objective

Involves community with the school district by matching teacher requests with volunteer resources. Recruits, trains, and assigns volunteers where needs exist and arranges recognition for their efforts.

Primary Tasks

1. Communicates with teachers and volunteers to advocate for use of the program, motivates volunteers to participate, and monitors assignments.
2. Recruits, trains, and supervises volunteers from the community who participate in school activities.
3. Develops and monitors policies, forms, materials, and handbooks regarding volunteer service.
4. Creates displays and bulletin boards to raise awareness of volunteer services.
5. Prepares reports to track utilization of volunteers, time, and activities.
6. Coordinates recognition events and activities to show appreciation for volunteer efforts.

Related Tasks

7. Performs other duties as assigned.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Direct and/or plan activities of others.
- Ability to function as a team member.
- Ability to handle confidential matters appropriately.
- Ability to work independently with minimal supervision.
- Ability to interact effectively with others.
- Demonstrate effective organizational skills.
- Communicate effectively with staff, parents, district residents, and community resource people
- Influence people in their opinions, attitudes or judgements.
- Perform a variety of duties.

Equipment Used

Word processing software, spreadsheet, photocopier, phone, camera, audiovisual equipment presentation software.

Required Training

- High school degree
- Experience working with children

Recommended Training

Coursework in computer usage, volunteer recruitment training and volunteer recognition beneficial.

Reports to

Building principal and community education coordinator.

Contributed by Whitewater Unified School District

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Effective Practices: Focus on Volunteering

by Jane Grinde, Team Leader
DPI Bright Beginnings and Family-School-Community Partnerships

The value of volunteers in the schools goes beyond the extra hands available to help cut out trees for the bulletin board, listen to a child practice multiplication facts, or raise money for computer software. The greater value is working toward the common goals of the school community and gaining the sense of belonging to a learning community.

The end of the school year is a good time not only to recognize the individuals who volunteered but also to conduct an evaluation and to consider developing a family and community participation policy.

When asked at the beginning of the school year, most parents indicate an interest in volunteering, but by the end of the school year, how many parents have actually volunteered? How many parents felt welcome in the school building? How many were contacted at least once to get involved with a project? How many were given realistic opportunities to contribute? How many of those who volunteered felt they were doing something worthwhile? If a parent said no to one request, was the parent asked again? Were the opportunities offered at different times of the day and both at home and at school?

These are the kinds of questions worth asking as school staff evaluate their volunteer programs. Many parents say they have indicated they are willing to help, but no one calls them.

They say they want to use their talents to help. They want guidelines for volunteering, and training, if necessary. Most parents want to help, but too often by the end of the school year in too many schools, not nearly enough parents participated in projects. A sample survey for parents to complete follows this article. The survey may help schools evaluate their volunteer efforts.

Volunteering is one type of participation recommended in the framework for family-school-community partnerships *(see appendix)*. According to Joyce Epstein, director of the National Network of Partnership Schools, schools have a responsibility to improve volunteer recruitment, training, work, and schedules involving families because they support students and school programs.

Volunteering can be done in the school or classroom, for the school or classroom, or even as an audience member attending student performances and sports events, recognition and award ceremonies, and celebrations.

Definition: *Volunteer not only means those who come to school during the day but also those who support school goals and children's learning in any way, at any place, and at any time.*

Epstein recommends several practices to promote the use of volunteers, including:

- An annual survey to identify interests, talents and availability of volunteers
- A parent room or family center for volunteer work, meetings, and resources for families
- Class parents, a telephone tree, or other structures to provide all families with needed information
- Parent patrols to increase school safety
- An annual review of schedules for student performances, games, and assemblies for daytime and evening audiences.

One of the biggest challenges to a volunteer program is coordination and accountability. Someone needs to be responsible for the program, preferably someone paid to do the job. The volunteer coordinator's duties include:

- Recruiting widely for volunteers so that all families know that their time and talents are welcome.
- Making flexible schedules for volunteers, assemblies, and events to enable working parents to participate.
- Providing training for volunteers, and matching time and talents with school needs.

The school's action team for partnerships should consider what results it wants for its volunteer program. Epstein identifies results for students, teachers, and parents:

Results for students

- skills in communicating with adults
- improved skills that are tutored or taught by volunteers
- awareness of many skills, talents, occupations, and contributions of parents and other volunteers

Results for parents

- understanding teacher's job
- conduct of school activities at home
- self-confidence about ability to work in school and with children
- awareness that families are welcome and valued at school
- gains in specific skills of volunteer work
- enrollment in programs to improve own education

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Results for teachers

- effective organization, training, and use of volunteers
- readiness to involve families in new ways, including those who do not volunteer at school
- awareness of parents' talents and interests in school and children
- greater individual attention to students because of help from volunteers

For more information about the National Network of Partnership Schools, check its website at http://www.scov.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/index.htm.

For ideas about expanding opportunities and participation in your volunteer program, log on to Every Parent a Volunteer at http://www.everyparent-volunteer.org/AtoZ0.htm.

Survey of Parents on Volunteering

(Sample)

Dear School Family:

Our school is working to improve ways that school and families can help each other and help all children succeed in school. One of the wonderful things about our school is the opportunity to participate in the school community and get to know other families. We recognize that parents and other adult family members contribute in many different ways to the success of their children's learning, and there is no one right or best way to do that.

Because schools and children do better when families are involved, and because the school staff can't do it by themselves, a committee of your parent association is seeking ways to help all families participate more fully in their children's learning. The committee is focusing first on the importance of **volunteering.**

At our first meeting, we decided we need to learn more about

- Who volunteers and why.
- What types of volunteer activities people are doing.
- What needs the school has for volunteers.
- What other schools in the area do to encourage, or even require, participation by parents.

Our goal is to recommend a family participation policy that is respectful of families, staff, and students, and results in an improved learning community.

Please take a few minutes to complete the following survey. Since we value the opinions of all families, we plan to follow up with a phone call if we don't hear from you within two weeks.

Sincerely,

Family Participation Committee
(Include names and telephone numbers.)

Volunteer Survey *(Sample)*

1. What types of volunteering have you done this past year? Check as many as apply. Add others you can think of that aren't listed.

   ❑ Lunchroom Duty
   ❑ Worked in the Library
   ❑ Playground Duty
   ❑ Chaperoned a Field Trip
   ❑ Worked at Home
   ❑ Served as an Officer in the Parent Association
   ❑ Organized an Event
   ❑ Clerical Work
   ❑ Worked with Children *(Tutoring, Listening to Children Read, etc.)*

   List Others: _____

2. Approximately how many hours of volunteering have you done this school year?

   _____

3. Did you fill out the volunteer request form at the beginning of the school year?

   ❑ Yes ❑ No *(If **yes**, were you contacted by someone? If **no**, why not?)*

   _____

4. Have there been times when you volunteered to help and no one called you?

   ❑ Yes ❑ No *(If **yes**, for what?)*

   _____

5. Were there times when you volunteered and did not feel welcome?

   ❑ Yes ❑ No

   Comments: _____

6. Were there times when you volunteered when you felt it wasn't worthwhile, either for you, the students, or staff?

   ❑ Yes ❑ No *(What was it?)*

   _____

7. Are there volunteer activities you would like to do but haven't had the opportunity to do so?

   ❑ Yes ❑ No *(If **yes**, what would you like to do?)*

   _____

8. Would you feel comfortable suggesting a volunteer activity you would like to do rather than waiting to be asked?

   ❑ Yes ❑ No

9. Do you favor REQUIRING participation in at least one fund-raiser?

   ❑ Yes ❑ No

10. Would you favor a requirement that every family volunteer a certain number of hours to the school?

    ❑ Yes ❑ No *(Suggestions?)*

    _____

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Developing a Good Volunteer Position Description

Most schools rely on parents to fulfill many of their volunteering needs. Since parents with spare time on their hands are an increasingly rare commodity, more schools are reaching out to the community for volunteers. Schools seeking community volunteers may want to create a volunteer job description explaining the volunteer's role in school, its place in the community, and what-and whom-are needed for the job.

Since it may be one of the earliest contacts prospective volunteers have with your school, the job description should be friendly and welcoming and include some of the benefits the volunteer is likely to gain from his or her service.

How does a school put together a simple, accurate volunteer job description? Start by answering some of the following questions:

- What will be the volunteer's role in the mission of the school?
- What are the volunteers' responsibilities?
- What could the school **not** do or not do as **well** without the help of volunteers?
- When do these tasks need to take place?
- Where do these tasks take place?
- What skills, personality traits, other qualifications do volunteers need to do these tasks?

Following, is a sample volunteer job description schools can use as a starting point. Be sure to tailor any job description to your needs, making it reflect the environment of your school.

Be prepared to answer these frequently asked questions of volunteers, either in your school volunteer job description or in person:

- I work full time. When can I volunteer?
- How do you place volunteers?
- How many hours do I need to commit?
- Do I need experience working with children?
- Can I volunteer at home?
- Do I need to attend an orientation?
- What kind of training will I receive?
- Who should I use for references?
- Do I need a tuberculosis test and a background check?

Volunteer Position Description

(Sample)

Title/Position:

Goal of Position:

Activities:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Time Frame:

Length of Commitment:

Estimated Total Hours:

Schedule:

Work Site:

Qualifications Sought:

1.
2.
3.

Benefits:

1.
2.
3.

For Further Information

Contact:

Phone:

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School Family Centers: A Place to Grow Volunteers

More and more schools are establishing family centers in their buildings to strengthen family-school-community partnerships. A family center provides parents with a room or space of their own to use at school, and encourages communication between families and the school. Above all, family centers can make parents feel welcome in their children's school.

The Department of Public Instruction opened its family center in March 1999 to model what schools are doing and to promote creation of more school family centers. The school family center can be a wonderful "garden" in which to grow the spirit of volunteerism, as well as the number of people needed to carry it out. Volunteer activities and services can be coordinated at the center, and volunteers can staff the center. A family center with a welcoming and friendly atmosphere can help parents, volunteers and staff members relax, get to know one another, and obtain needed help and services that contribute to improved learning for children.

> *The presence of parents can transform the culture of a school.*
> Sarah Lawrence Lightfoot,
> author of *The Good High School: Portraits of Character and Education*

The Family Center Has Many Uses

Here are more ideas for cultivating volunteers and volunteerism in your school family center. Use the center as a space to:

- conduct workshops for parents on topics linked to school goals, such as helping children with homework or improving student math achievement
- train and recruit volunteers
- offer child care for the younger children of volunteers
- develop and analyze parent surveys
- have partnership team meetings
- organize a "Volunteer Appreciation Day"
- welcome new families
- translate school materials
- develop a community resource guide
- make home visits to families
- conduct parent-teacher conferences

Key Points for a Successful School Family Center

The following points summarize the factors essential to organizing and maintaining a useful, well-used school family center:

- everyone, including families, school staff, and community members, should benefit from activities offered by the family center.
- Involve as many different parent, school, and community perspectives as possible from the start to engender a sense of common ownership.
- Set a timeline for tasks and responsibilities to maintain momentum.
- Wherever the family center is located, it must be perceived as an accessible and safe place to go. The center should offer a welcoming atmosphere where parents can relax, visit with other parents and school staff, and obtain needed services.
- More important to starting a family center than a large budget is a firm commitment to the idea and willingness to explore all possible sources of support.
- Participants should be given primary responsibility for decorating, furnishing, and supplying the family center.
- The support and encouragement of the administration and staff are essential to the family center's success.
- Teachers will support the family center if they perceive that the family center is used to enhance children's learning.
- From the beginning, set clear objectives and plan to evaluate the center.

Family centers can strengthen school-family relationships which, in turn, result in improved learning for children.

Excerpted from the resource guide, Organizing a Successful Family Center in Your School, *published by the Family-School-Community Partnership Team of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Call 1-800-441-4563 or 608-266-9356 for a copy.*

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Expectations for Volunteers and Schools

What should volunteers expect when they offer their time and talent? What should schools expect of the parents, community members, and others who volunteer with children? Here are a few ideas to consider in setting up and expanding a school volunteer program. Add to these or tailor them to fit your needs.

Expectations of Volunteers

Volunteers contribute and are responsible for maintaining a professional attitude of mutual respect and competence. Believing that the schools have a real need for volunteers, volunteers will...

- offer support and service at the direction of school staff.
- be punctual and responsible in fulfilling duties and commitments and in notifying the school of absence.
- attend orientation and training sessions related to responsibilities as scheduled.
- accept supervision and evaluation graciously.
- conduct themselves with dignity, courtesy, and consideration.
- become familiar with school and classroom policies and practices. Will abide by the policies and procedures of the assignment.
- consider as confidential all information heard directly or indirectly while on duty.
- endeavor to do work of the highest quality regardless of the assignment.
- participate in information-sharing conferences and training as needed.

Expectations of Schools

Schools are responsible for maintaining a student-centered learning environment that fosters respect for individuals and the self. Since volunteers serve at the request of schools and schools have a real need for volunteers, school staff will...

- treat volunteers with respect.
- attempt to assign volunteers to positions that suit their abilities and likes.
- provide volunteers with adequate information about the school, its policies, people and programs.
- offer training for the job.
- offer guidance and direction.
- make sure volunteers understand to whom they can communicate concerns.
- give volunteers the opportunity to offer comments or suggestions about their experiences.
- express appreciation for volunteer service, including recognition, fair treatment, a smile and "Thanks!"

School Board Policy on Volunteer Helpers

(Sample 1)

Services of volunteers may be accepted by the board, the district administrator, central office administrators, and building principals and assistant principals.

Volunteers may come from all backgrounds and all age groups and may include any persons willing to give their time to help students and school staff. Volunteers may be involved in virtually every facet of the operation of the school district, working with students on a one-to-one basis or performing tasks not involving students. Duties may involve services to the libraries, classrooms, athletic events, music programs, field trips, and similar activities.

School personnel will identify appropriate tasks for volunteers and will plan inservice activities for them so they may become skilled in performing those tasks.

Volunteers will not teach but may reinforce skills taught by the professional staff.

Volunteers may not provide transportation to students in their personal automobiles for any school-sponsored activities.

For the purpose of the district's insurance program, volunteers will be required to make written application for specified services, and such services will be accepted in writing by the appropriate school personnel listed in paragraph one of this policy. The completed form will be retained in the files of the school official accepting the services of the volunteers, and a copy will be forwarded to the coordinator of volunteer services.

REF: Wisconsin Statute 118.292,Wisconsin Statute 118.295, Wisconsin Statute 120.12(2)

This sample school board policy is provided by Janesville Public Schools, Janesville, Wisconsin.

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Policy On School Volunteers

(Sample 2)

The School Board supports community involvement as an integral part of the educational goals of the School District. Therefore, the development of volunteer relationships is recommended and encouraged.

Specifically, volunteers can:

- Enrich the school program by sharing their experiences and talents with students.
- Stimulate community interest, concern and support for education.
- Provide an opportunity for interested community members to become directly involved with education.
- Provide students with reinforcement of skills.
- Strengthen school-community partnerships through direct and positive participation within the schools.
- Improve student self-image and help make learning enjoyable.
- Enhance all aspects of the education process.

Duties may involve service to the libraries, classrooms, athletic events, music programs and field trips, tutoring/mentoring youth and similar activities. Volunteers shall not teach but may reinforce skills taught by District staff.

The safety and well-being of the students, staff and volunteers of the District is paramount. Therefore, the District shall conduct criminal background checks on all volunteers who will be working **directly with and/or who have access to students. Background checks will be conducted prior to the first time the individual volunteers to work with students and the District reserves the right to conduct additional background checks periodically thereafter.**

All prospective volunteers shall be provided with a copy of the District's volunteer handbook. This handbook shall provide volunteers with important information regarding volunteering in the schools and working with students, and provide guidelines for employees to refer to when considering the use of volunteers. Inservice and training activities shall be planned for volunteers if necessary, so that they may become knowledgeable of applicable laws, policies and procedures and skilled in performing their assigned tasks.

School volunteers shall be expected to abide by all applicable laws, District policies and administrative procedures when performing their assigned responsibilities. All District employees working directly with a volunteer are responsible for directing and supervising the activities of the volunteer **with broad supervision provided by the building principal.** Volunteers shall be covered under the District's liability policy while performing their authorized duties.

Volunteers shall be restricted from access to confidential student and employee record information except as otherwise specifically provided and consistent with legal requirements and District policies and procedures. Volunteers shall be responsible for maintaining confidentiality regarding information seen or heard while working as a volunteer.

It is the responsibility of District teacher and administrators to recognize the contributions of volunteers, with the advice and assistance of other employees.

Provided by the Wisconsin Heights School District

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Want to Keep School Volunteers? Recognize Them!

Almost everyone appreciates recognition for a job well done. Showing appreciation to volunteers, teachers, parents, and students contributes to their willingness to serve and to their contentment. Volunteer appreciation and recognition take many forms, such as thank you notes from teachers and students, formal recognition ceremonies and dinners, honor certificates, and workshop attendance.

Consider nominating outstanding volunteers who have made a substantial impact in your program for local and regional awards that identify and honor outstanding volunteers

Motivate Volunteers.

Job satisfaction is the best motivator. Be sure the volunteers are matched well with their jobs. Volunteers want to know that their efforts will be appreciated and their suggestions listened to. Invite volunteers to school social functions. Give more challenging work to volunteers who desire it. For example, volunteers may want to learn word processing to help with their work. A verbal thank you or short notes of praise sent to each volunteer are simple but effective ways of showing appreciation and building motivation. A volunteer can be recognized each month. Give volunteers regular feedback. Treat them as part of the staff.

Here are ways to show recognition and sensitivity toward school volunteers:

- Smile
- Greet by name
- Give a certificate of appreciation
- Send a birthday card
- Say "We missed you"
- Take time to talk
- Promote a Volunteer of the Month program
- Give free hot lunches
- Give free admission to school sports or arts events
- Present a Certificate of Appreciation
- Greet volunteers when they come to help
- Maintain safe working conditions
- Make nametags to identify volunteers
- Have a volunteer suggestion box
- Arrange for discounts
- Award plaques to sponsoring clubs/groups
- Take time to explain their responsibilities
- Place recognition article in newsletter
- Give periodic orientation and training
- Invite to school functions
- Say "thank you"
- Send letter of appreciation to employer
- Nominate for volunteer awards
- Welcome to staff coffee breaks
- Encourage administrators to talk with them
- Ask for a report on their observations on effective volunteering
- Be pleasant
- Give them challenging jobs
- Enlist them to train other volunteers
- Send a holiday card
- Use as consultants
- Have a public reception
- Let them grow with the position
- Provide childcare and transportation
- Respect their preferences

(Sample)

Certificate of Appreciation

presented to

_____

for Your Contributions as a Volunteer at

_____

_____
Signature

_____
Date

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School Volunteer Enrollment Form

(Sample)

Directions: *Please print the following information* Date:

Your Name	Telephone Area/No (Daytime) (Evening)

Address: Street/City/Zip

List the school(s) and grade level(s) for which you are interested in volunteering

Which do you prefer? *(check one)* ❑ Assisting only with my child's grade/class ❑ Assisting with any grade/class if needed

How are you willing to volunteer? *(Check all that apply)* ❑ Within the School ❑ Working from Home ❑ No Preference

List the days you are available to volunteer

List the times of day you are available to volunteer

How often are you willing to volunteer? *(Check one)* ❑ More that once a week ❑ Once a week ❑ Once a month ❑ Other *(Please Explain)*

Following is a general listing of some of the type of volunteer opportunities that are available in the School District. Please check the opportunities that are of interest to you.

❑ Tutoring Children

❑ Clerical *(e.g., typing, record keeping, filing, duplicating, computer assistance)*

❑ Classrooms *(e.g., assisting groups of students, field trips, creating/managing instructional materials)*

❑ General School *(e.g., organizing, supervising or managing special activities, events or programs)*

❑ Before and/or After School Programs *(please specify)*

❑ Special Skills or Talents *(List those you have and are willing to contribute-e.g., music, artistic, leadership, group supervision, fundraising, technology, career day presenter, or special experiences.)*

Other Ways I could Help

As a volunteer working in the school district, I understand that this is a volunteer position that entitles me to no pay or wages from the district for my services. I have read the Volunteer Handbook, and I agree to the rules and guidelines in it. I understand that the information on this form will be added to a school district database and that I may be contacted to volunteer in the areas specified. I understand that this volunteer agreement can be ended without notice at any time by either the school district or me.

Volunteer's Signature ➢	Date
Building Administrator's Signature ➢	Date

Please return this form to your school office or by mail to: *(Fill in school mailing address)*

Adapted from a document contributed by the Wisconsin Heights School District

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A Teacher's Guide to Using School Volunteers

The effectiveness of school volunteers depends largely upon the skillful guidance of the classroom teacher. The attitude of the teacher toward the volunteer can encourage and inspire, or it can discourage and defeat.

Following are some answers to questions teachers frequently ask when they consider using volunteers.

What are School Volunteers?

School volunteers are the parents, students, senior citizens, service organization members, and other community members who care about students and want to help the school district. They perform a variety of tasks, including reading to students, sharing hobbies and careers, and assisting with clerical or classroom duties.

Why Do I Need a School Volunteer?

Some of your teaching ideas may require more than two hands to make them succeed. You may need more time to prepare special projects or exhibits, or you may need more time with a student who needs a little extra attention or just someone to talk to.

Can a Volunteer Lighten the Load or Enrich the Curriculum?

Yes! Are there nonteaching jobs which require gathering and organizing material for the classroom or bulletin boards? Maybe you just need an extra set of eyes and ears.

Are Volunteers Trained and Oriented?

All volunteers are required to attend an orientation meeting which explains what is expected of them, including areas such as confidentiality, organization of the program, and reliability. You may want to give additional training to help volunteers become familiar with the environment of your classroom.

What Types of Volunteers are Available?

Academic long-term volunteers are assigned to a specific staff member and participate directly with students in an academic setting.

Short-term volunteers help in areas where assistance is needed for a limited time, including classroom projects, plays, or special study units held during the year.

Community resource volunteers are people with special interests, hobbies, or talents who can be called on to share their travels, careers, or other knowledge with students.

What are the Responsibilities of Volunteers?

Volunteers are directly responsible to the teacher and must notify the school if they will be late or absent. If a problem occurs, the teacher should address it immediately or contact the principal or the district volunteer coordinator if further action is needed.

The volunteers who come to school vary as greatly in their strengths and weaknesses as students do. They come with a real desire to help. With patience, respect, and guidance, they will work with the teacher to benefit students. That's what the school volunteer program is all about!

Contributed by the Janesville Public Schools, Janesville, Wisconsin

Teachers: Vital Links in the School Volunteer Program

Encouraging teachers to feel ownership for and to support school volunteer efforts is key to the success of the volunteer program. Teachers are one of the most important links in the entire volunteer program.

The following tips will help get your school volunteer efforts off to a promising start.

Tips to Gain Teacher Support for Volunteers

- Be sure to invite teachers from different grade levels in your building to help plan, design, and implement the school's volunteer program from the ground up.
- Start your planning efforts by surveying teachers about their volunteer needs and concerns.
- Devote inservice time to training teachers on how to use volunteers, explaining relevant school policies, and answering questions.
- Invite teachers to make a site visit to view first-hand a successful volunteer program in other buildings. Engage substitutes for the visiting teachers.
- Include teacher comments and observations in evaluations of the school volunteer program.

Tips to Help Teachers Conduct a Successful Program

- Get to know the volunteer. Take advantage of his or her special interests, talents, and skills in the activities you plan.
- Assume responsibility for introducing volunteers to the school staff and students with whom they will be working.
- Explain your classroom's rules and basic management procedures.
- Explain the purpose and importance of tasks so the volunteer understands how his or her contributions will help.
- Let the volunteer watch your teaching techniques as you demonstrate activities for students.
- Encourage the volunteer to help plan activities or make suggestions.
- Say "we," not "I," to help the volunteer feel included.
- Plan specific and clearly defined activities for the volunteer.
- As abilities and strengths become apparent, increase the volunteer's responsibilities.
- Provide a regular time each week to plan with the volunteer.
- Make time to ask the volunteer for feedback about his or her progress or to answer any questions.
- Give directions and explanations in nontechnical terms but don't "talk down" to a volunteer.
- Give credit when it is due!
- Recognize the contributions of the volunteer through daily expressions of appreciation and encouragement as well as with certificates of appreciation presented at a school ceremony.
- Remember, there are some responsibilities that should NOT be delegated to a volunteer:
  - diagnosing
  - consulting with parents
  - evaluating on a formal basis
  - prescribing
  - providing initial instruction
  - disciplining students

Contributed by the National Association of Partners in Education (NAPE), Inc., 209 Madison Street, Suite 401, Alexandria, VA 22314 (703) 836-4880. Web site: http://www.napehq.org

For ideas about how schools can establish standards for volunteering, read the PTA handbook on parent involvement standards on the National PTA Web site: http://www.pta.org/programs/invstand.htm.

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Teacher Request for Volunteer Service

Teacher's Name	Grade	Date of Request
Position	Days Volunteer(s) Needed	
Time of Day Volunteer(s) Needed	Amount of Time Needed	

Activities for Volunteers *(Check as Many as You Need)*

One-Time Volunteers

- ❑ I need volunteers for specific one-time events or tasks such as chaperoning a field trip, providing baked goods, or providing child care.

Work at Home

- ❑ I can use volunteers willing to help from home with classroom projects and other activities.

Academic

- ❑ Listen to students read.
- ❑ Conduct flash card drills.
- ❑ Tell stories to students.
- ❑ Help students use IMC resources.
- ❑ Tape record textbooks so students who have reading problems can listen to cassettes as they read their assignments.
- ❑ Assist in science and math labs.
- ❑ Help in vocational classrooms and labs, such as agribusiness, business/ marketing, FACE, and technology education classes.
- ❑ Help students who have been absent make up missed work.
- ❑ Assist non-English speaking students in expanding their vocabulary/conversation.
- ❑ Play instructional games.
- ❑ Talk to children; be a friend.
- ❑ Help with handwriting practice.

Enrichment

- ❑ Prepare bulletin boards.
- ❑ Make props for plays.
- ❑ Gather resource materials.
- ❑ Help students with keyboarding.
- ❑ Help students with arts and crafts.
- ❑ Make lists of resource materials.
- ❑ Discuss careers, training opportunities, and college selection.
- ❑ Bring in community resource people to speak on experiences and expertise.
- ❑ Describe personal participation in political campaigns and local history.
- ❑ Encourage and assist in fine arts.
- ❑ Help student with foreign language.
- ❑ Play musical instruments for students.
- ❑ Dramatize a story.
- ❑ Discuss/participate in celebrating special occasions/holidays.
- ❑ Demonstrate hobbies, pioneer crafts, and special interests.
- ❑ Provide time to illustrate, organize, and print writing projects.
- ❑ Assist staffs of student publications, yearbooks, newspapers, and AV productions.
- ❑ Show personal slides.

❑ Other. Please use this area to further clarify your request or to explain a need not on the check list.

I understand that this request is not a guarantee of receiving volunteer help as the availability of volunteers varies.

Name of School

Teacher's Signature ➢	Date
Principal's Signature ➢	Date

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Reflecting Classroom Faces: Encouraging Diversity Among Volunteers

The increasing diversity of Wisconsin schoolchildren challenges educators to involve volunteers of diverse backgrounds, whether they are parents or grandparents, community members, or college students, in children's education. Schools which devote some time and thought to attracting volunteers who reflect the diversity of the community can also have some of the most exciting and dynamic programs.

Children from all cultural backgrounds tend to do better in school when parents participate in their education. It is essential for schools to reach out to families who might not otherwise be involved at school, including those parents for whom English is a second language and those for whom volunteering is not a cultural tradition. For example, the concept of volunteering is relatively rare in Hispanic and Asian cultures. Schools who recruit Asian and Hispanic parents help families bridge the gap between home and school and help children feel more confident in school. Hence, volunteering can also assist in acculturating groups new to the United States.

Tips for Involving Volunteers of Diverse Backgrounds

- Welcome parents to your program; they are the first and most important teachers of their children. Ask parents or staff members from diverse cultural traditions to welcome families, encouraging all parents to become involved as volunteers.
- Encourage family members to read together in their native language or English, and to visit the library monthly. Your reading program, school, and the local library can help parents identify books that are interesting and appropriate for each child's current stage of development.
- Make sure high-interest storybooks are readily available in English and in the child's native language.
- Select tutors who can appreciate the child's language and cultural diversity. Children may be shy or hesitant when trying out new skills; they may worry about making mistakes. Tutor training should stress attention to individual student's needs, a positive outlook, flexibility, patience, and cultural sensitivity.
- Collaborate with a parent literacy program, religious organization, local business, or college to recruit tutors, obtain materials, and locate funding sources.
- Recruit volunteers through local native-language television and radio stations, newspapers, newsletters, and community bulletin boards. Post notices in English and in students' native languages. Also note if the school can use volunteers able to help with translation.
- Provide translators for parents who speak other languages.
- Produce written materials in the languages represented in your school. For example, develop packets of volunteer information and home learning activities in both Spanish and English so Spanish-speaking parents feel welcome to work with their own children and volunteer with other children.
- Interpret and translate workshops and materials into the languages needed by the parents, enabling them to participate fully in school activities.

For More Information and Assistance

- "Diversity and Volunteerism: Deriving Advantage from Difference," http://www.energizeinc.com/art/jdiv.html by S. Rodriguez, the Journal of Volunteer Administration Spring 1997, vol.15, no.3, pp.18-20.
- Fostering Diversity in your Volunteer Program:http://www.cybervpm.com/divers.htm
- Managing Diversity http://www.umich.edu/~igrc. IGRCC: Program on Intergroup Relations, Conflict and Community. The materials for two courses at the University of Michigan. Includes an excellent bibliography on intergroup relations and managing diversity.
- The ASPIRA Association, Inc. highlights its two national parent involvement programs. Each program provides a Spanish/English curriculum that strives to empower Latino families: http://www.aspira.org/. ASPIRA promotes the development of the Puerto Rican and Latino community through education and leadership development of its youth.
- "Tips for Finding and Serving Children Who Most Need Help in Reading" America Reads Challenge, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC: http://www.ed.gov/inits/americareads/resourcekit/.
- National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education
The George Washington University
1118 22nd Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037
E-mail: askncbe@ncbe.gwu.edu
Web: http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu
Tel: 202-467-0867; fax: 800-531-9347

- Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA)
U.S. Department of Education
600 Independence Avenue, SW
MES Rm. 5086
Washington, DC 20202-6510
Web: http://www.ed.gov/offices/OBEMLA
Tel: 202-205-5463; fax: 202-205-8737

- Project FLAME
(Family Literacy: Apprendiendo, Mejorando, Educando)
Center for Literacy
University of Illinois at Chicago
1040 W. Harrison (M/C 147)
Chicago, IL 60607
Tel: Dr. Flora Rodriguez-Brown, contact, 312-996-3013

Including Migrant Families in School Volunteer Efforts

Migrant agricultural families are probably the most highly mobile population of all rural families. Migrant children experience many obstacles to school success because of language differences, significant poverty, and disruptions in school attendance as a result of their families' work. Migrant families have strong ethnic identities and come from cultures rich in oral tradition. Encourage children to share stories, songs, and games in their native language.

Tips for Greater Involvement

- Recruit families using the families' native languages. Spanish, Vietnamese, Khmer, Laotian, and Haitian Creole are among the languages spoken by migrant families.
- Consider recruiting Federal Work-Study students who are bilingual to work as tutors with migrant families. The Office of Migrant Education has awarded High School Equivalency Program (HEP) and College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) grants to assist older migrant students who may also be available to recruit as tutors. For contact information about HEP and CAMP programs, visit the OME web site at http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/MEP.
- Enlist as tutors high school and college students in foreign-language programs who may have insight into the challenges of reading and writing in a second language and can use tutoring as a means to complete community service requirements.
- Encourage families to share their family stories, traditions, songs, and games. Create bilingual books with students based on oral traditions.
- Recruit older children to help translate and write the stories.
- Encourage local partners to provide incentives such as prepaid phone calling cards, native language films/videos, food, and games for families and their children.

Excerpted from "Tips for Finding and Serving Children Who Most Need Help in Reading." America Reads Challenge, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC. http://www.ed.gov/inits/americareads/resourcekit/.

For More Information and Assistance

- Migrant Education Director's (OME) web site: http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/MEP/
- The Office of Migrant Education, 202-260-1164
- Migrant Education Hot Line, 1-800-234-8848
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is coordinating an America Reads project in its migrant rural housing developments. Contact Jim Coyle, 202-260-5710, for information about USDA's effort.

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Fathers as School Volunteers

Research on father involvement in children's academic lives suggests a positive and lasting impact in children's cognitive, social, emotional, and moral development. It also suggests that how men relate to children is influenced by how they think about their role, how others perceive them, and whether or not they have a support system. But many children have no contact with their biological fathers, and are hard pressed to find any males positively involved in their lives. Keeping research and reality in mind, how can we help parents engender healthy and consistent relationships with men who are positive role models?

Let's start with our language. Begin to actively and positively use the words, men, fathers, dads, stepfathers, male role models, foster fathers. There can be many types of significant father-figures in the lives of children, i.e., uncle, biological father, grandfather, mom's boyfriend, or adopted dad. Books, academic records, handouts, and parent-teacher conferences can reflect this understanding, and can send a very healthy message. Some children may have more than one father-figure. Avoid saying that fathers "babysit" their own children; they *father* their children.

What School Administrators and Staff of All Grades Can Do

- Encourage fathers to visit schools by making PTA meetings specifically welcoming to them. Hold meetings at times that work for father's schedules. Hold weekend events and request their participation and expertise in the planning, recruiting, and implementation of such events. Having a "dad rep" for school board meetings, or district-wide events is one way to honor the involvement of healthy fathers.
- Involve grandfathers, as well as father figures, in special events and gatherings at school. Take time to send welcoming invitations to these men, and mail invitations directly, instead of having the child bring them home.
- Provide opportunities and incentives for teachers and all staff to attend inservices regarding creative and effective ways to involve fathers in their children's academic life.
- Declare one day of the year to be "Fathers in Schools Day."
- Have a bulletin board in the schools dedicated to sharing information about fathers, resources, and healthy images of fathers with their children.

What Teachers in Elementary Schools Can Do

- Enthusiastically recruit fathers for volunteer jobs at schools like: hall monitor, visitor registration desk, tutoring, telling stories to all classes, recess monitor, or activity leader. Have them join with the field trips and school visits to the zoo, police stations, etc.
- Host workshops for fathers supporting their efforts in reading to their children, and helping children read to them. Invite father-figures to the library, have the children teach them how to check out books.
- Host a special "bring your Dad to School Day." Also, have fathers host their child's class at the father's place of work or his favorite place of avocation.
- Once per week, invite a father, (or a positive male role model) to have lunch with his child(ren); this can be fun and send healthy messages.
- Encourage fathers to share their arts or crafts with the school children. Many fathers sing, write poetry, dance, write plays, or tell stories. Find ways to weave their gifts into your curriculum in affirming ways.

What Teachers in Secondary and High Schools Can Do

- Ask fathers to lend their skills to events like: building sets or props for the school drama productions, playing a musical instrument with school bands, baking goodies for the annual fund raiser.
- Provide fathers with literature about the impact of television on children. Encourage fathers and students to view age-appropriate programs together, then discuss or write about their perspectives on what they saw.
- Invite fathers who are from different countries or who speak different languages to class and teach a brief unit on culture and language. Hearing a story or learning some words from another country can be fun and enriching for both the father and the students.

Ideas for Fathers and Children Learning Together

Have teachers assign the children special tasks to be done with fathers at home, at school workshops in groups, or away. Here are just a few enjoyable things younger students could do or make with their fathers:

- Create memory keepsake boxes. This is an excellent way for children to keep letters, mementos, special photos, even videotapes of their father figures when they live long distances from each other, or if the father has died.

• Create ice sculptures or a snow project during a winter carnival. Create spiderwebs and dream catchers for the spring or the fall.

• Take a walk outside together with a journal and record the sights and sounds around you. Try to identify any animal noises that you might hear.

• Keep a journal of books that fathers and children read together. Perhaps have father and child draw their favorite parts of certain stories in the journal. As homework, fathers can sign off when they have seen a book report and have talked with the child about it.

• Collect leaves and, after studying the names and information about the tree from which they came, press and label the leaves in a scrapbook.

• Plant a tree together. The schools could provide donated seedlings and materials for fathers to pick up. This activity would work well for Arbor Day, Earth Day, or Mother's Day.

• Do a unit in school on space or airplanes, or science projects on aerodynamics, then send home directions and materials for children and fathers to make paper airplanes together. At some point, it could be fun to have fathers come to school to teach the class how they make paper airplanes. Everyone could go to the gymnasium and try them out! Incorporate this theme and these events into journal writing, essays, and art projects.

• Assign the student and father to make a meal together. Encourage creative cooking, not fast food. They can take turns reading about recipes, and orchestrating the whole process. Here is a chance to learn about each other's favorite foods, as well as good nutrition, any family-oriented traditions, celebrations, or holiday meals.

• Throughout the year, assign a student and father to create something special for the student's mother, or sister, aunt, or grandmother, in order to honor female family members, as appropriate.

Imagine what it will be like when school staff, fathers, and families unite in common efforts to provide children of all ages with the opportunity to have that increased edge of personal and academic confidence, or to develop the sense of right and wrong. We have the means to bring this to our children while building that special bond between them and their father-figure.

Excerpted from the article, "It's Elementary--Uniting Schools, Children and Fathers" by Jeffry Jeanetta-Wark, originally printed in Father Times, a publication of Fathers' Resource Center, Minneapolis, MN. Reprinted with permission.

Using Volunteers in the Special Needs Classroom

by Leslie Benson, CESA 6 Volunteer Coordinator

With a little commitment, compassion, and common sense, volunteering in the special needs classroom can be a positive learning experience for both the child and the student volunteer.

What Are the Benefits of Having Volunteers in the Special Needs Classroom?

- Peers or older students bring out good socialization and play skills.
- High school students bring lots of positive energy, and children idolize them.
- Senior citizens bring vast experience, give back to the community, and receive many internal rewards.
- Parent volunteers may acquire a better understanding and awareness of the range of ability levels in children.
- Volunteers become educated about disabilities.
- Allows for quicker prep and clean up time in the classroom.
- Teacher can give more individual attention to students.
- Safety and supervision of students increase.
- Teachers have more time to work on learning goals for each student.
- Relieves teachers from non-teaching duties, such as typing, housekeeping, etc.

What Can Volunteers Do in Your Class?

- Read to students
- Facilitate play
- Prepare materials
- Conduct small group activities
- Work one-on-one with students
- Supervise or direct choice time activities
- Work on independent self-help skills
- Support fine and gross motor activities
- Clean
- Videotape
- Clerical tasks
- Assist with art projects
- Supervise students with a real workbench and tools
- Help with "Child Development Days"

What Can Student Volunteers Do?

High school or college students, with their youthful enthusiasm, can form special bonds as both role models and friends of the children they volunteer with. Student volunteers can:

- Read to students, with special emphasis on use of expression, left-to-right orientation, and picture context clues
- Assist with computer activities
- Play games
- Make books
- Teach simple songs
- Reinforce academic or non-academic skills as directed by the teacher
- Help students complete assignments

Suggested Guidelines for Volunteers in the Special Needs Classroom

The following guidelines are used by CESA programs with student volunteers. Before volunteers begin interacting with students in a CESA program, it is suggested that the CESA teacher meets with the potential volunteers to:

- Explain activities in which they will be involved.
- Discuss matters of confidentiality.
- Explain how the classroom operates and classroom rules.
- Make it clear that all decisions about students are to be made by the teacher.
- Hold an introductory session for students to meet volunteers and for the volunteers to observe the classroom.

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Planning Your School's Intergenerational Program

Schools are natural settings for intergenerational activities and communication, and retired persons are natural resources for intergenerational programs. Many retired persons live within walking distance of the neighborhood school. They have the potential of being important resources to students in a variety of curriculum areas. Too often in our society, retired persons are "put out to pasture." The time, knowledge, energy, and incredible list of skills and experience they have that could be passed on to the younger generation too often go untapped.

If our older citizens are involved and knowledgeable about schools today, they are much more likely to support them. In many districts, nearly 75 percent of the taxpayers do not have children in the schools. The over-60 population will soon reach 22 percent of the total population. The importance of enlisting the interest and support of these older citizens in support of school budgets is evident.

Assess Interest

Some questions to ask before planning to undertake projects that bring retired persons into the schools are:

- Are administrators, teachers, school board members, and parents interested in the concept?
- Are there individuals who are willing to serve as a catalyst to bring school staff and community people together to do planning?

If an interested person is willing to assume the role of catalyst and there is approval to go ahead, the next step is to start networking with retired persons and the organizations that work with them in the community.

The teachers' interest is fundamental as they will have the closest contact with the retired person. Without an enthusiastic response from the teachers, there is no point in going further. The principal's voluntary participation is also necessary. These programs must have interest and support from the grassroots level to the highest administrative position to be successful.

To develop a successful program, start with a needs assessment, joint planning, shared responsibilities, and an atmosphere of trust among participants. Members of the network must be willing to share ideas and "give them away." If these elements are incorporated, the participants of your network will feel ownership of the program and will work hard to promote intergenerational activities.

After a planning committee has been formed, the roles of all members must be identified and defined. What those roles will be depends on the level of involvement the group decides to undertake.

Involvement Varies

Levels of involvement can vary. In many locations, some intergenerational contact at a minimal level has already been occurring. Older people, through clubs or nursing homes, have been coming into the schools on a sporadic basis to provide a single program in the form of idea exchanges, discussion sessions, oral history, or musical presentations. A distinction must be made between activities that are mostly social and those that are ongoing.

Other involvement may include establishing a volunteer program where youth provide chore service or "friendly visiting" to retired persons in the neighborhood. A third area of involvement is services for retired persons in the school. These involve lunches, invitations to school activities, and educational opportunities.

Suggestions for setting up an ongoing volunteer program include:

1. Conduct an inservice session explaining the concept to teachers and support staff.
2. At a later date, have teachers make written requests for specific volunteer assignments, stating times needed and job descriptions. Provide training to teachers about working with volunteers and on aging issues.
3. Form a working committee for each school or for the district as a whole. Include parents, retired persons, teachers, a principal, and community representatives. The committee will plan, recruit, publicize, and assist in implementing projects.
4. Appoint a staff volunteer coordinator for each school. The coordinator will take requests from teachers and forward them to the cooperating community agency or will recruit volunteers on their own.

Successful Programs

Successful, longtime intergenerational projects provide for

- networking with community agencies and individuals from outside the school.
- joint planning, shared responsibility, and shared credit. These lead to a sense of ownership of the pro-

gram, which is necessary if the program is to continue after the "catalyst" has moved on.

- evolving programs. Start small, be flexible, and give the program time to evolve. Programs sometimes take two to three years to get established.
- measuring results. This will show you the strong points and help you improve the weak points.

The benefits that result from these projects far outweigh the cost of the extra effort, time, and, sometimes, funds that need to go into them to make them work.

Retired persons gain self-esteem and feel needed and appreciated when they become involved in helping students. The students gain appreciation for cultural heritage and history and receive help with the basics through these projects. They also gain in self-esteem from the shared friendships and the individual attention. Teachers benefit from the assistance and enrichment that volunteers provide. The school reflects the warmth and caring that results from having retired persons become a part of the life of the school.

Community Benefits

Further benefits to the community are the breaking down of age stereotypes and the bringing together of ages that have been segregated from one another. The result is a neighborhood or community that cares about its members and does not pit one age group against another for scarce resources.

Article is provided by RSVP of Dane County.

Additional Resources

Community Education Program
Wisconsin Dept. of Public Instruction
P.O. Box 7841
Madison, WI 53707
(608) 266-3569

Retired Senior Volunteers Program of Dane County (RSVP)
517 North Segoe Road
Madison, WI 53705
(608) 238-7787

Wisconsin Intergenerational Network (WIN)
P.O. Box 6664
Madison, WI 53716
(608) 224-0606

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Ideas for Involving Retired Persons in the Schools

The Benefits

Intergenerational programs—bringing youth and older adults together—can become natural in schools.

An intergenerational partnership

- brings experience to those who need experience.
- creates mutual understanding through dialog and face-to-face contact.
- promotes school as a learning center for all ages.
- promotes positive older adult images to youth.
- brings lessons of the past and real-life experiences into the classroom.
- offers older adults an opportunity to contribute.

Program Ideas

Tutoring. Retired persons tutor students on a one-to-one basis or in small groups in reading and other subjects.

Room Grandparents. This is a new concept at the elementary level that goes beyond just tutoring. The "grandparents" spend time with the students on a more informal basis than tutoring. They bring a wide variety of cultural and educational experiences into the classroom once or twice a week.

Mentorships. Volunteers work with talented and gifted students on special projects.

Computer Laboratory Assistant. Volunteers with computer knowledge and experience can tutor students.

Folk Fair. This day-long activity in a school gymnasium allows 30 to 40 retired persons to share their crafts, arts, skills, and music with the students. This is an excellent way to keep alive cultural and ethnic heritage.

Apprenticeships. Volunteers work with small groups of students on a regular basis—perhaps after school—in a concentrated craft, hobby, or interest area.

Teaching Arts and Crafts. Volunteers help students with arts and crafts projects in classes or small groups.

Musical Presentations. "Kitchen bands," musical groups, and individual musicians share their talents and skills with students.

Aging Seminars/Discussion Groups. Older volunteers discuss their personal history and attitudes about growing older or discuss current events issues with middle school students. Volunteers go to classrooms and talk to small groups of students for one or two sessions.

Oral History. Volunteers come into the classroom to talk about what schools were like in their day and on other topics of interest to students. They may bring memorabilia to show.

Storytelling. This is somewhat different from relating oral history, as favorite stories from the past are told in a dramatic fashion.

Friendly Listener Projects. Volunteers are matched with third- through fifth-grade children who are either home alone after school or who desire the contact of a "grandparent." The children call the volunteers when they get home from school or when they have a problem. There are opportunities here for volunteers, parents, and students to get acquainted and to get to know each other better and thus establish lasting relationships. Screening and training are provided to the volunteer. School supervisory staff and principals are involved.

Media Center Helper. Volunteers check out books, read stories, and perform other duties as needed.

Teacher's Helper. Volunteers make bulletin boards and booklets, correct papers and workbooks, and help the teacher with other paperwork. Many of these activities can be done at home.

Special Education Projects. Volunteers make learning materials for special education programs.

Getting Started

Contact your county Commission on Aging for information on linking up with older adult volunteer programs, such as RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program); form a study committee; bring in appropriate resource persons from area agencies; or design a pilot program in your school. Three good contacts include:

Community Education Program
Wisconsin Dept. of Public Instruction
P.O. Box 7841
Madison, WI 53707
(608) 266-3569

Retired Senior Volunteers Program of Dane County (RSVP)
517 North Segoe Road
Madison, WI 53705
(608) 238-7787

Wisconsin Intergenerational Network (WIN)
P.O. Box 6664
Madison, WI 53716
(608) 224-0606

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Tips for Tutors

Tutors Build Teamwork!

The following suggestions will help build a positive, supportive relationship between you and the child you tutor.

Build a Warm Relationship

One of the important rewards of tutoring is the relationship you develop with the child you tutor. Many of the children who need to be tutored have had limited success in the classroom. You need to become their coach, their friend, and their mentor. They need to feel that they can trust you.

When working with a child, it is important to offer a great deal of encouragement. Following, are several helpful phrases to use when the child you are tutoring shows improvement:

- You have such good ideas.
- Wonderful response!
- You really got a lot done today.
- You really understand it now.
- Good answer!
- You should be so proud of yourself.
- I'm proud of you.
- I really enjoy working with you.
- I like the way you corrected that.
- Good thinking!

Be honest about the child's accomplishments and comment positively when appropriate. Honesty and sincerity will help you build a good relationship.

Helpful comments for a child when he or she makes a mistake include:

- That wasn't quite right, but you can try again.
- That isn't quite correct, but it was a good try.
- You're on the right track. Keep trying.

It's not only what you say, but how you say it that will keep a student on track. Your tone of voice and the expression on your face, for example, can tell a student if you are sincere.

Children who build strong bonds with their tutors will look forward to working with them and will want to succeed. You may want to spend some time thinking about the caring part of the tutoring experience.

Learn About the Child You Are Tutoring

Who is he or she? Show an interest in the child you are tutoring, her family, where she lives, her siblings, her friends, what he likes to do after school, and his favorite hobby. Remember, using children's interests increases their positive attitudes about learning. The child you are working with may also want to know about you, your family, what activities you like, your favorite books and hobbies, and how you feel about reading and writing.

Find Out About a Child's School Work

Ask the teacher what your child is learning about at school. What does he do well? What areas does he need to pay special attention to? Does she have any disabilities that would affect her reading and writing performance?

Communicate With Parents

Work with the teacher of the child you tutor and use the short note to parents in this guide to communicate with them about what you have been working on together and the progress that the child is making. Most parents will also be very interested in knowing how they can contribute to their child's progress.

There is no substitute for the feeling of knowing that you, as tutor, have made a difference in the life of the child you work with and have become part of the fabric of life joining children, families, the classroom, school, and the community. Happy tutoring!

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Tips for Welcoming People With Disabilities as School Volunteers

Provided by the Wisconsin Coalition of Independent Living Centers

School volunteers come ready to contribute all kinds of skills and talents. Do make recruiting people with disabilities part of your school volunteer plan. Following, are a few tips for establishing a school volunteer program that welcomes people with disabilities.

Assume that persons with disabilities *want* to be school volunteers, just like everyone else.

- Treat a volunteer with a disability the same way you would treat anyone else—with dignity and respect.
- Use the term, "a person with a disability," rather than the words, "disabled person" or "handicap."
- Learn where to find and recruit as volunteers people with disabilities. Students with disabilities make wonderful volunteers, too!
- Learn how to communicate with volunteers who have special communications needs. Ask school staff for ideas.
- Ensure that your recruitment materials are in formats that are accessible to all persons with disabilities and that they do not ask disability-related questions. Also, during an interview, don't ask if a person has a disability.
- Write volunteer job descriptions that identify the essential functions of each job. As with all volunteers, make sure each person is able to perform the essential functions of the job.
- Make sure people with disabilities feel free to volunteer in many ways. Don't assume that you don't have any volunteer jobs that a person with a disability can do.
- Assume that people with disabilities can do many volunteer jobs, *not* that certain volunteer jobs are unsuited to persons with disabilities.
- Train supervisors to make reasonable accommodations for volunteers with disabilities.
- Most likely, many of your staff members are experienced, comfortable, and well-qualified in working with people with disabilities.
- Make sure your school is accessible.
- Relax, make volunteers comfortable, get to know them, and appreciate them!

For more information, contact Maureen Ryan, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Coalition of Independent Living Centers, 106 E. Doty, Suite 3A, Madison, WI 53703 or 608-251-9151.

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For Volunteers Working With Young Children

Tips to Ensure a Rewarding Experience

Volunteers who use patience and loving care will earn the trust of young children and be a source of reassurance and comfort for them. Children pattern themselves after the adults in their lives, including volunteers, who treat them with tender care. Volunteers who are consistent and fair reap the unique rewards reserved for special people in the lives of young children.

Here are some tips to help volunteering with young children be a rewarding experience:

- Give lots of smiles! Ask children questions about what they are doing. Children love to share what they are creating or playing with.
- Children go through developmental stages as they play and learn. Each child is an individual and develops at a different pace.
- Always remember that the needs of children come first. Completing projects or working on materials can be finished later.
- Whenever possible, try to guide students in a positive way. Example: "Use small voices in the classroom," instead of, "Stop yelling!"
- Give children advance notice of activity changes. For example, announce, "We have five minutes to play before it is time to clean up."
- Never discuss children outside the classroom. Confidentiality is a must!
- If you are frustrated with a child, ask the teacher for suggestions later. Never discuss a child in front of the child or during class time.
- Help children help themselves! Encourage a child to try to complete a task by herself. Offer to help the child after she has given a good effort.
- Praise a child for what he can do. Never point out what he can't do.
- We can laugh with a child, but never at a child.
- Watch for times when children need extra attention or words of encouragement! You can help children feel better about themselves and about their abilities to try their best.
- If possible, allow children to solve their own conflicts or help them solve their own conflicts. Try not to judge who is right or wrong.
- Warm smiles will be richly rewarded by the children.

Leslie Benson, Volunteerism Grant Coordinator, CESA 6, Oshkosh, Wisconsin, in conjunction with Department of Public Instruction.

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Making Family Involvement a Priority With Reading Volunteers

Schools using reading volunteers can help families make reading a priority, and offer families many valuable ideas and opportunities to encourage their children to read.

Family involvement strategies can be incorporated in the design of any reading volunteer program. Here are some specific suggestions:

- **Enroll families as well as their children in the tutoring/volunteer program.** Provide written and verbal explanations of the roles of children, tutors, and families to ensure that each child becomes an engaged reader by the end of third grade.
- **Provide a communication journal or audiotape for each family.** Volunteers and families can keep in touch by writing or recording messages delivered by the child.
- **Give families progress reports at regular intervals.** Meet with families at home or in school to share information about what the child has learned and to plan for the future. Be sure to schedule meetings at times convenient for the family.
- **Make sure every home has children's books and writing materials.** The program can share donated books and drawing and writing supplies, organize a toy and book lending library, encourage families to use the school and public libraries, and sponsor book giveaway events funded by community partners.
- **Encourage families to learn.** Address the following topic ideas (and come up with your own!) in newsletters, tip sheets, videotapes, workshops, and resource libraries:
  - Children Should Be Heard—How Can You Make Time to Listen?
  - Beyond the Books—What Else Can You Find at the Library?
  - Play Together, Learn Together
  - Creating a Special Place at Home for Reading and Writing
- **Encourage all families to read aloud with their children.** Ask every family to make time to read aloud with their child every day, regardless of their own reading skills. Model read-aloud techniques with storybooks, poems, songs, and wordless picture books.
- **Plan reading-related events with families.** For example:
  - Hold a family field trip, then suggest ways to follow up at home by re-telling the stories through drawing pictures, reading a book about the topic, and suggesting other titles to borrow.
  - Set up a family book-making activity using family photographs, and describing what makes their family unique— foods, customs, celebrations, and people.
  - Hold parent-child computer classes, asking children to teach their parents.
  - Host a book talk, choosing a book families can read with their children. Invite the reading specialist or children's librarian to lead a discussion for parents and children to share their thoughts about the characters, plot, and the story's message.

Excerpted from "On the Road to Reading: A Guide for Community Partners," developed for the America Reads Challenge, December 1997. A joint project of the Corporation for National Service, the U.S. Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Make Reading a Part of Every School or Community Event.

To increase participation, be sure to

- provide information in families' home languages
- schedule the event at a time convenient for most families
- offer transportation to and from the site
- provide food—healthy snacks or a simple meal
- include siblings, both younger and older
- ask active families to reach out to others

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Tips for School Volunteering: Your Love Made Visible

By Hannah Pickett, Ph.D. and School Volunteer

In small, almost invisible ways, school volunteers can touch a youngster's life—perhaps forever stretching cycles of years. For over two and one-half years, I have volunteered every Monday to work in Vickie Julka's classroom at Glenn Stephens Elementary School in Madison. We have worked wonderfully together.

What made my volunteering so "wonderful?" It had absolutely nothing to do with my education, with my profession before I retired, or with becoming a grandmother. I discovered that "working wonderfully" as a volunteer demands many qualities:

- caring for and enjoying children
- great patience
- deft observation of the teacher and the climate of the classroom
- acting as an extra pair of eyes, ears, and hands for the teacher
- an ability to work with the teacher's style
- an ability to work with each child's individual ways

Not included in "working wonderfully" as a volunteer are imposing your style and structure, and getting too deeply involved with the children. I've learned that it is essential for volunteers to observe and try to accommodate the style, the rhythm, and the structure the teacher has designed. It's a plus if you find yourself immediately admiring the teacher and the classroom. But it's far more likely that you will find the classroom a dizzying place with many children and a teacher all working in different ways. The volunteer must be ever watchful to successfully fit into this "dizzying place" and be significantly useful.

I was very fortunate to be assigned to a teacher whose style and structure fit my own personality supremely well. I have, however, volunteered in classrooms where I had to work much harder at figuring out where and how I could be useful. After all, volunteers are there to be useful, and it may take many discussions with your teacher to reach that end.

> *A child goes forth each day*
> *and each object he comes upon*
> *becomes part of him.*
> *For that day, a part of that day*
> *For that year, or ever stretching cycles of years*
>
> — Walt Whitman

Getting too deeply involved in children's lives is a very sensitive issue. Children can very easily become dependent on anyone who works with them. Instead volunteers better serve children when they help them to reach out to their teacher and their classmates, o achieve reading and writing goals and all the infinit possibilities that await them.

In all honesty, it is delightful when a child greets you with joy, but a "wonderful volunteer" works to help children be as delighted to get back to each other and their work. Volunteers facilitate and assist children in their work. Hugging and holding are easy solutions; being part of creating a caring environment is not all that simple.

Children need to:

- feel your eyes on them.
- hear, "Good Job."
- have your hands when they need your hands.
- try to read to you, try to write for you, draw for you (Wait for the golden moment they really read and write and you happen to be there!)
- have you respect their individuality.

A short story about my encounters last summer, at the beach, at a mall, and at the Farmers' Market, will perhaps best illustrate the reasons for volunteering. On each occasion I was approached by a different young mother who exclaimed "You're Mrs. Pickett! My child told me all about you and all the wonderful things you did together. You made Monday so special! Thank you."

From behind each Mom would appear a youngster. One child I knew, and we really liked each other, but I don't recall ever working with the other two. Perhaps we sat at a table where they worked or walked near them on our way to the library.

I tell you this, not because I was so special. As far as I know, I barely connected with these two youngsters. But the three children in their own ways, decided the volunteer was there for *them*, that I chose to be with them and was available to them. Being there and caring is really what volunteering is all about.

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Everyone Can Do Something

Ideas for Family Volunteering

Hands. Little hands and big hands. Wrinkled hands and chubby hands. Hands with gnarled knuckles and hands with painted nails. Helping hands come in all shapes and sizes—and ages. They are the helping hands of family members who pitch in to clean up a park or clean up a little face, hold a book being read to a youngster or hold a family back-to-school picnic.

More and more schools are discovering that involving parents in the education of children becomes easier when the whole family is invited to participate as volunteers who care and who learn by doing. Family volunteering adds a dynamic element to school volunteer efforts, connecting schools to the community in a new and vibrant way. From preschoolers to grandparents, everyone can do something.

What are Some Benefits of Family Volunteering?

For Families

- Provides opportunities to spend additional time together as a family and create a history of "family memories."
- Increases the sense of individual, family, and cultural pride.
- Provides children with the "best" role models—their own family members.
- Provides learning experience and skills development.
- Provides an opportunity to address critical needs of families or neighborhoods by empowering individuals.
- Passes on values and a sense of civic responsibility to each generation.

For Schools

- Welcomes and connects with all families and segments of the community—parents and nonparents, business and civic organizations, preschoolers and golden agers.
- Creates opportunities for single-parent and working parent families who might otherwise have difficulty volunteering.
- Cultivates community-wide familiarity with and support for the mission of the schools.
- Provides a wider, longer-term pool of volunteers with ideas and expertise to meet the needs of children, families, and schools.

For Communities

- Sensitizes and educates families about community issues, service systems, and the difference that participating citizens make.
- Strengthens social networks among families and builds a sense of community with institutions they are affiliated with: schools, the workplace, parks, civic groups, etc.

What Are the Challenges?

The challenge is in designing opportunities for families to volunteer, especially in considering families' time demands and the types of activities that individuals of all ages and backgrounds can learn from and enjoy. Be sure to design volunteer opportunities around existing needs in your school and community. Here are some ways that families can volunteer:

- Tutor or mentor children.
- Provide meals for a homebound neighbor on a regularly scheduled day.
- Package and distribute food at a food pantry.
- Visit families in a homeless facility.
- Read to children or the elderly at school or a community center.
- Teach reading or writing to children at a school or to adults at a local nonprofit agency.
- Visit those in need. Offer to clean the house or yard, help with a task, or just listen.
- Provide free childcare to parents struggling to attend school or work.
- Take turns transporting someone with a regularly-scheduled medical or educational need.
- Organize or participate in environmental projects in your school or neighborhood such as tree plantings or recycling drives.
- Provide animal care for community parks or nature preserves in your area.
- Clean up a nearby park, beach, hiking trail, or other public area.
- Arrange a history or storytelling hour at a school, community center, or nursing home.
- Organize a community garden to beautify an unused plot of land.
- Volunteer to repair housing facilities in your community or to improve a school playground.

Tips for Getting Started

Fold a family volunteering program into your school's ongoing programs. You don't necessarily have to start something new, but do consider these tips.

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Start small. Begin with one program that involves families.

Test your ideas. Try out what you think will work before making a long-term commitment to it.

Ask families. Involve families in planning and designing volunteer activities. They will have valuable ideas about what works and what is needed.

Learn from others and network. Ask other groups for advice about how to work with family volunteers. Create partnerships where appropriate.

Match families to suitable projects. If possible, allow families to choose from a variety of volunteering opportunities. A project that's right for an older adult-teen family may not be suitable for a younger adult-toddler family.

Ask for feedback. Find out how a family feels about what they're doing and what ideas they have for doing it differently or better.

Get teachers on board from the start. Make sure teachers are included in planning and designing family volunteer efforts. They will be a valuable source of support and information about how family volunteer activities can enhance what students are learning in school.

Recognize your volunteers. Families need to be commended for their volunteer efforts just as individual volunteers do. Recognize them in similar ways.

This article is adapted from information presented by Family Matters, a program of The Points of Light Foundation. For more information about family volunteering, write National Program Manager, Family Matters, 1737 H Street NW, Washington, DC, 20006 or call 202-223-9186, ext. 117.

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Families in Education
Learning Together School Volunteer Guide
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Mentoring Offers Youth and Adults Many Learning Opportunities

"Mentoring has become one of the most important initiatives in the education reform movement of this decade," says Susan G. Weinberger, Director of Public Affairs for the Norwalk, Connecticut, School System.

Wisconsin schools have implemented a variety of mentoring programs. For example, the Wauzeka School District supports at-risk students in grades nine through 12 by matching them with adult mentors from the community. Mentors work with students on personal, social, emotional, and academic issues. Students and mentors initially spend time building trust before concentrating on other issues. Students and mentors are able to explore career options and discuss personal concerns confidentially in a safe environment. Local mentoring organizations include Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Boys/Girls Clubs, Junior Achievement, as well as community organizations and clubs such as the Volunteer Center, Rotary Club, Kiwanis, Lions Club, YMCA, YWCA, Foster Grandparents, 4-H. You should contact your local Volunteer Center to locate which organizations provide mentoring opportunities in your area.

Mentoring Options

The Racine Unified School District operates a mentoring program to foster the potential of students, in cooperation with the Racine Big Brothers/Big Sisters and the Racine Area Manufacturing and Commerce Association. The program offers students three options.

Student-Adult Mentoring. The adult mentor works with the training center and a small group of students.

Traditional Adult Mentor. The adult mentor provides close personal contact with a student on a weekly basis for about 30 to 60 minutes.

Vocational Mentoring. Area employers help local youth by linking students with entry-level positions in business and a local youth training center.

Mentoring Philosophy

The philosophy of vocational mentorship programs has often been compared to a braid. The strength of the braid lies in the fact that each of its strands—student, businessperson, and retiree—are combined.

An example of vocational mentorship is found at Madison's East High School. In this program, the Dane County RSVP matches retired people with at-risk high school students and places the students in a local business to help them consider career alternatives.

Some of the Benefits Mentors Bring to the Lives of the Students Include

- encouraging students to graduate from school.
- helping students build self-esteem.
- acting as a bridge between school and work.
- instilling or reinforcing a good basic work ethic or study skills.
- helping to improve students thinking and reasoning skills.
- helping students to understand why they must learn to study and work independently.

Most importantly, the mentor may be the one adult in a student's life who offers complete, individual attention for the time they are together each week. Be persistent. It may take a while to be matched with a child. Application, screening, and training can take from one to six months to complete. Mentoring programs are concerned with the well-being and safety of children and volunteers, and their selection and screening procedures reflect that concern.

Questions Schools May Want to Consider When Starting a Mentoring Program Include

- What kinds of problems currently exist for youth in the community?
- What groups do you want to serve and involve in the program—both the youth being served and potential adult mentors?
- Who will provide leadership and accountability for the program?
- How will the program's effectiveness be measured?
- Will existing programs duplicate your efforts?

Common Questions Potential Mentors May Ask Include

- What kind of training and support do you offer?
- How do you match young people with mentors?
- What are the different mentoring options? (one-to-one mentoring, team mentoring, short-term mentoring, one-time projects, etc.)

- What happens if I stop mentoring?
- What if my help isn't wanted?
- What if I'm too different to relate well?
- What if I do something wrong?
- What if the person I mentor is a disappointment?
- What encouragement can I give if my student disappoints himself or herself?

Mentor's Agreement

You may want to present this sample agreement to mentors in training or before they start to help them understand how important their commitment is to the success of the mentorship.

As a mentor, I agree to:

- Arrange for reasonable times to meet with my student.
- Help my student in whatever way is most appropriate.
- Maintain a safe environment during all activities.
- Attend orientation, support meetings and mentor/student gatherings as often as I can.
- Establish a friendly relationship with the parent(s) and support their role(s) in the child's life.
- Keep the coordinators informed of problems and/or progress of the friendship and to let them know if I wish to be re-assigned or continue as a mentor at the end of the year.

From The Mentor's Guide, *Shirley D. Hammond, Madison Metropolitan School District, 1992*

Resources for Mentors

- The National Mentoring Partnership advocates for the expansion of mentoring and serves as a resource for mentors and mentoring initiatives nationwide. Visit its website at www.mentoring.org or contact the partnership at 2801 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20007, (202) 338-3844.
- *The Mentoring Guidebook*. National Dropout Prevention Center, 205 Martin Street, Clemson University, Clemson, SC 29634-0726, (864) 656-2599.

Part 2

Youth Service-Learning Opportunities

Youth Service-Learning in Wisconsin

Youth Service: A Paradigm Shift

CESA Contacts

Learn and Serve America Grants

Essential Elements of Service-Learning

Integrating Service-Learning into the Curriculum

Outcomes of Youth Service-Learning

Tips for Organizing Your Youth Service-Learning Program

Community Service Project Ideas

Resources for Service-Learning

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Youth Service-Learning in Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Vision

Wisconsin will provide students with opportunities to learn how to become productive and responsible citizens through service to their communities.

Service-Learning

- helps students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet genuine community needs and are coordinated in collaboration with the school and the community;
- is integrated into students' academic curriculum and provides structured time for students to think, talk, or write about what they did and saw during the service activity;
- provides students with opportunities to use newly-acquired skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their own communities; and
- extends student learning beyond the classroom and into the community, and helps foster the development of a sense of caring for others.

The Wisconsin Service-Learning 4-Point Test

Use this "test" to evaluate your service-learning project or program. These questions can guide you in developing an effective, high-quality service-learning experience.

- Are students involved in the planning of the project? Are community groups, agencies, or organizations partners in the project? In what ways?
- Does the service meet a real community need? How was the need determined? Who benefits from the service?
- Is the service activity connected with classroom learning and the curriculum? What about after school projects?
- Is there an opportunity for students to reflect on the experience? Do the students talk or write about what happened? How are students involved in the evaluation of the project, and in planning for the next project?

Youth Service: A Paradigm Shift

Young people can and should be more than passive recipients of community services. They can help the community find solutions for a better tomorrow. Young people must be regarded as leaders, thinkers, doers, sharers, and creators, and provided with opportunities to contribute to positive change.

When one considers the meaning of school success, service-learning makes perfect sense. Through service-learning, students are able to retain information and improve their understanding through experiential learning and service to others.

Youth Service: A Paradigm Shift

Traditional View	Service Learning
Utilize Resources	Act as Resources
Passive	Active
Consumer	Producer
Needs Help	Offers Help
Recipient	Giver
Victim	Leader

Source: National Youth Leadership Council, 1910 West County Road B, Roseville, MN 55113 (651) 631-3672

CESA Contacts

The Corporation for National and Community Service was established by Congress in 1991 to encourage volunteerism. By awarding "Learn and Serve America" grants to states, it supports the development of youth service-learning programs.

Wisconsin distributes its Learn and Serve America funds through its twelve Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESAs). Each CESA makes Learn and Serve America mini-grants available to schools and community-based organizations (CBOs) on a competitive basis. Each CESA has a Service-Learning Coordinator who can provide training and technical assistance in service-learning for schools and CBOs. Below are the telephone numbers for each CESA. Please see the map on the next page for the CESA in your region.

CESA #1 (414) 546-3000 West Allis	**CESA #5** (608) 742-8811 Portage	**CESA #9** (715) 453-2141 Tomahawk
CESA #2 (608) 758-6232 Milton	**CESA #6** (920) 233-0512 Oshkosh	**CESA #10** (715) 723-0341 Chippewa Falls
CESA #3 (608) 822-3276 Fennimore	**CESA #7** (920) 492-5960 Green Bay	**CESA #11** (715) 986-2020 Turtle Lake
CESA #4 (608) 786-4800 West Salem	**CESA #8** (920) 855-2114 Gillett	**CESA #12** (715) 682-2363 Ashland

Learn and Serve America Grants

A Sampler of Projects

Every year, over 200 school- and community-based Learn and Serve America mini-grants are awarded to school districts and community-based organizations in Wisconsin, leading to the involvement of nearly 25,000 students and over 5,000 adults in providing over 340,000 hours of service to their schools and communities! Following are a few examples:

- In **Prairie du Chien**, the middle school Y.E.S. Team (Youth Eager to Serve) adopts monthly themes with different projects for each grade level. Since 1993, students have conducted a drunk driving awareness campaign, visited nursing homes and hospitals, collected money for a food pantry, audiotaped books for special needs students, held an aging seminar, tutored other students, and completed dozens of other projects.

- High school students in **Alma** worked with the city to improve the Rieck's Park Wildlife Area and boardwalk, clean up the shoreline, improve signage on the hiking trail that runs from the city to the Buena Vista Overlook, and have begun planning a nature study area for their school on 200 acres of land donated by Dairyland Power. They also continued a multi-year "Adopted Grandparent" program with students from the junior high.

- Six middle school students in **Stoughton** created public service announcements for a national campaign against teen pregnancy and won awards for seven of the ten PSAs they submitted. Several of their entries were produced for print and television campaigns.

- In **Clear Lake**, students decided to transform a canary grass field near their school into an "environmental classroom" with a sediment pond, a wetland area, a wildlife pond, and a prairie buffer area. Students solicited the help of the school district, the village board, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Lions Club, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, a "master gardener," and several prairie restoration experts.

- Sixth and seventh-grade **De Soto** students visited nursing homes, held a Sesquicentennial Folk Fair with 35 retired community members, and completed an "Old School" project in which they interviewed nursing home residents about their childhoods and created a book out of the interviews. The students read the residents' stories to them and gave each a copy of the book. Students also worked with eighth graders on environmental projects and an anti-smoking skit for elementary school students.

- In **West Salem**, first-, second-, and third-graders designed, constructed, planted, maintained, and harvested a vegetable garden for the local food pantry. Students from the junior high school constructed benches for the garden, and high school students helped with the planting.

- In **Shawano**, 287 first- through fourth-graders landscaped school grounds, cleaned up local parks, participated in walk-a-thons to raise funds for the Humane Society and for a family whose home burned down. They also visited a nursing home, acted as peer mediators, and ran penny drives to benefit the Wolf Alliance, Trumpeter Swans and the Navarino Nature Center.

- Students with cognitive and emotional disabilities in **De Soto** created a flower garden a few years ago. Other elementary students in their school decided they wanted a garden as well, so they created a larger garden for both flowers and vegetables. The students with disabilities acted as peer consultants, or "master gardeners," for the regular education students.

- In **Fort Atkinson**, students adopted a local Head Start program. They established a Spanish Storybook Library and practiced their language skills by speaking

with children at the center whose first language is Spanish. The students were able to get computers donated to the center and have hosted monthly "Reading and Technology Nights" for the children and their families.

• High school students in **Richland Center** conducted blood drives, sponsored an elementary fun day and petting zoo, built a basketball court at a local park, cleaned up local highways and the lakeshore, made wooden toys for Christmas distribution, and ran an aluminum can drive.

These and hundreds of other projects throughout the state demonstrate that Wisconsin youth, when given the opportunity, can make a difference in their communities through service, sharing and pride.

For more details, contact your CESA Youth Service-Learning Coordinator.

Essential Elements of Service-Learning

According to the National Service-Learning Cooperative, high-quality service-learning practice is characterized by 11 essential elements.

Effective Service-Learning

- requires the application of concepts, content, and skills from the academic disciplines, and actively involves students in their own learning;
- engages students in tasks that challenge and stretch them cognitively and developmentally;
- uses assessment as a way to enhance student learning as well as to document and evaluate how well students have met content and skills standards;
- engages students in service tasks that have clear goals, meet genuine needs in the school or community, and have significant consequences for themselves and others;
- employs systematic evaluation of the process of developing the service project as well as the service outcomes;
- seeks to maximize student voice in selecting, designing, implementing, and evaluating the service project;
- values diversity through its participants, its practice, and its outcomes;
- promotes communication and interaction with the community and encourages partnerships and collaboration;
- prepares students for all aspects of their service experience, including understanding their roles, the skills and information required, safety precautions, and sensitivity to the people with whom they will be working;
- includes student reflection as a central strategy for the fulfillment of curricular objectives, and provides reflection opportunities before, during, and after service, using multiple methods that encourage critical thinking; and
- acknowledges, celebrates, and further validates students' service.

High-quality service-learning also depends on effective organizational support. School districts, schools and community-based organizations can foster effective service-learning by ensuring that it:

- is connected to and relevant to the organization's mission;
- is supported by organizational policies that are designed to uphold quality service-learning practice;
- is supported by compatible structural elements and by the resources necessary to sustain high-quality service-learning practice;
- provides staff with strong training in the philosophy and pedagogy of service-learning; and
- offers staff ongoing opportunities to network, observe, and problem solve with other staff within and outside their schools in order to refine their service-learning practice.

Adapted from Essential Elements of Service-Learning *(1999), National Service-Learning Cooperative. Available from the National Youth Leadership Council, 1910 West County Road B, Roseville, MN 55113. Phone: (651) 631-3672. Website: www.nylc.org.*

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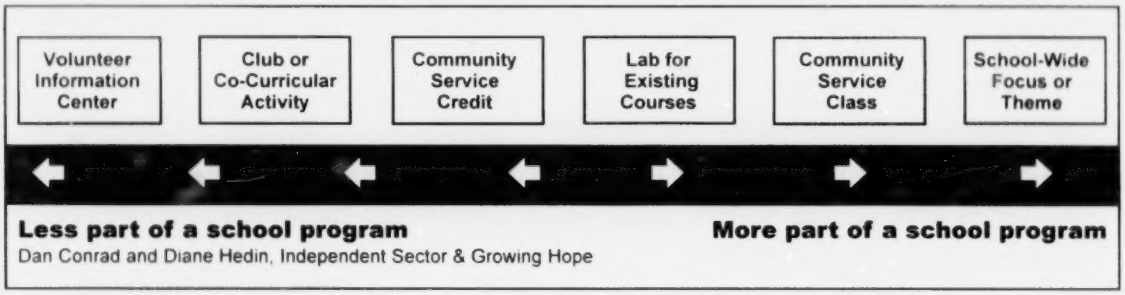
Integrating Service-Learning into the Curriculum

The following continuum represents a movement from a curriculum involving least-integrated service activities on the left to a curriculum involving most-integrated service activities on the right.


Volunteer Information Center
Club or Co-Curricular Activity
Community Service Credit
Lab for Existing Courses
Community Service Class
School-Wide Focus or Theme
Less part of a school program
More part of a school program
Dan Conrad and Diane Hedin, Independent Sector & Growing Hope

Volunteer Information Center

The center is a place in the school where students can learn about volunteer opportunities to be completed before or after school.

Club or Co-curricular Activity

The student performs community service under the auspices of an after-school club or activity. Some clubs, such as the high school Kiwanis Club, focus on service while others, such as the Honor Society, consider service as one component. Schools typically provide a faculty advisor sometimes as a volunteer and sometimes as a paid staff member.

Community Service Credit

Schools offer credit for those who earn it according to pre-established guidelines. In some schools, credit is earned for an established number of hours. In others, students are required to perform a specific number of hours in order to graduate.

Laboratory for Existing Courses

Students perform service as a way to gather, test, and supply the content and skills of an existing school course. For example, students may gain direct insight into a social problem by helping to alleviate it. Math or French students may test and expand their skills by teaching them to younger children, or interior decorating students may offer their decorating talents to an elderly couple or a young family.

Community Service Class

This is a course that exists as an integral part of the school's academic program. Community service is combined with classroom experiences in which the emphasis is on providing information, skills, and generalizing principles to help students learn from their experiences and to operate more effectively in their service assignments.

Community Service as a Schoolwide Focus or Theme

This is when the idea of community service permeates the school's total curriculum. The strength of this approach is that community service is not just the isolated activity of a few motivated students but a repeated and integral part of the school experience for all. What this model shares with others is that students are practicing the humane application of knowledge, discovering that education is not just something one gains but something to be used to improve the lives of others.

Source: National Youth Leadership Council, 1910 West County Road B, Roseville, MN 55113. (651) 631-3672.

Outcomes of Youth Service-Learning

For years, many Wisconsin schools have provided service and service-learning opportunities for students. Although practitioners are passionate in their belief in the value of service-learning, there has until recently been little research to support the belief by practitioners that service-learning can support both social and academic growth in young people. Below is a summary of service-learning outcomes that have been demonstrated through research in the 1990s.

The Impact of Service-Learning on Youth Personal and Social Development

- Service-learning has a positive effect on the personal development of public school youth.
- Students who participate in service-learning are less likely to engage in "risk" behaviors.
- Service-learning has a positive effect on students' interpersonal development and the ability to relate to culturally diverse groups

The Impact of Service-Learning on Civic Responsibility

- Service-learning helps to develop students' sense of civic and social responsibility and their citizenship skills.
- Service-learning provides an avenue for students to become active, positive contributors to society.

The Impact of Service-Learning on Academic Learning

- Service-learning helps students acquire academic skills and knowledge.
- Students who participate in service-learning are more engaged in their studies and more motivated to learn.
- Service-learning is associated with increased student attendance.

The Impact of Service-Learning on Career Exploration and Aspirations

- Service-learning helps students to become more knowledgeable and realistic about careers.

The Impact of Service-Learning on Schools

- Service-learning results in greater mutual respect of teachers and students.
- Service-learning improves the overall school climate.
- Engaging in service-learning leads to discussions of teaching and learning and best ways for students to learn.

The Impact of Service-Learning on Communities

- Service-learning leads to more positive perceptions of school and youth by community members.

From "Service-Learning Impacts on Youth, Schools, and Communities: Research on K-12 School Based Service-Learning, 1990-1999" (2000), Shelley H. Billig, RMC Research Corp., for the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Learning In Deed Initiative. Full bibliography available at www.learningindeed.org, or call (202) 778-1040.

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Tips for Organizing Your Youth Service-Learning Program

Teaching our youth about the real world is an important challenge facing all educators. Most would agree that the more we take the classroom into the community, the better students will learn to appreciate how their educational experiences relate to real life. In addition, these experiences help build self-confidence, knowledge about the community, and a personal satisfaction in helping the community become a better place for all citizens.

Emerging in Wisconsin and across the nation are many new efforts to promote the role of youth as active partners in community improvement. Youth community service programs are worth looking at. A few Wisconsin school districts require students to perform community service in order to graduate. In most districts, however, service is integrated into an existing course. Students may be offered a choice of participating in the service project or completing a research paper or other assignment. Not surprisingly, students invariably choose the service option. In this way controversy over "forced volunteerism" can be avoided. And usually, even the most resistant students end up enjoying their service experience.

It is important that students, teachers, administrators, and the community be active partners in planning a youth community-service program. The following are helpful hints on designing and organizing this type of program.

Make sure that a volunteer experience is meaningful for both students and community partners. Offer opportunities for students to reflect on their experiences by discussing the significance of the activities, their reasons for participating, and the outcomes for the community.

Design service experiences on a sustained basis rather than as a one-time-only assignment. As with any learning experience, the more they do it, the more students will learn.

Link the community service experience directly to a regular instructional program in the school. One of the primary goals of service-learning is to help students see the connection between school work and community living. Teachers should be involved in the design and supervision of these experiences.

Tie the community service experiences to real community needs in which the volunteer can make a meaningful contribution. The program is not intended to be job training, though service-learning is an excellent way to learn work skills. Service-learning can teach students how to work with others, including adults and civic leaders, to identify and address community strengths and needs.

Allow students maximum flexibility in choosing assignments and initiating contacts within a framework of school supervision and board policy. One of the purposes of the program is to encourage initiative and help build student confidence in seeking out meaningful community experiences.

Looking for more information on youth service ideas? One of the best contacts is the National Youth Service Leadership Council (NYLC), 1910 West County Road B, St. Paul, MN 55113, (612)b631-3672, (http://www.nylc.org).

Source: Stan Potts, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Community Service Project Ideas

The following is a list of potential community service activities a district may want to consider for its grant application.

- Tutor other students
- Shovel snow for the elderly
- Raise funds for a humanitarian or environmental group
- Clean up and repair a playground in the community
- Read aloud to kindergarten students
- Improve a local park
- Sponsor a community dance
- Develop and promote school improvement projects
- Help with a PTA/PTO project
- Sponsor a senior citizen "prom"
- Create an informational booklet or pamphlet on an important issue
- Write articles for the school or community paper
- Write a guide to advertising and media literacy, or create a video
- Monitor water quality and watershed pollution or radon gas in basements
- Initiate river or lake cleanup projects
- Design and build wheelchair ramps for local buildings
- Conduct recycling drives
- Sponsor a Family and Community Town Supper
- Create a play or radio show dramatizing an issue in the community
- Develop and promote a community beautification project
- Provide translation services for non-English-speaking adults
- Provide child care during a community event
- Volunteer at a homeless shelter as part of a study of homelessness
- Design and build picnic tables for a local park
- Design and participate in library enhancement projects
- Initiate a wildlife restoration project
- Promote tree planting and soil conservation
- Provide drunk driving awareness and prevention training to students
- Paint homes for the elderly
- Give presentations to community groups on important local issues
- Restore a prairie
- Provide entertainment for populations with special needs
- Hold a health and safety fair for the community
- Hold a food drive
- Provide activities for children at a local day care, Head Start or after-school program
- Help younger children learn more about computers
- Match regular education students with students with disabilities
- Tutor a non-native-speaker in English

Each of these projects can be undertaken in conjunction with classroom study of issues such as literacy, the environment, aging, poverty, and disability, in academic subject areas like history, government, geometry, human development, foreign language, biology, language arts, economics, and others.

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Resources for Service-Learning

Publications

Building Workers and Citizens for the 21st Century. Roseville, MN: Minnesota Educational Publishing Center, 1994. (800) 848-4912, ext. 2401. Describes how service-learning can be connected with a school-to work initiative and other career development efforts.

Enriching the Curriculum through Service-Learning. Carol W. Kinsley and Kate McPherson, editors. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1995. (703) 549-9110. Describes specific projects that have enhanced student learning. Also discusses how the service-learning approach can change a school's culture so that it becomes a partner with the community while involving students in hands-on learning, problem solving, and application of academic knowledge.

Growing Hope: A Sourcebook on Integrating Youth Service into the School Curriculum. Rich Willits Cairn, and Jim Kielsmeier, editors. National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC), 1991. 260 pages, paperback. (651) 631-3672. Designed for educators beginning or expanding curriculum-based youth service programs. It offers background, comprehensive definitions, rationale, nuts and bolts implementation help, sample program materials, forms, and resource materials.

Effective Service Learning Series. Irving H. Buchen and Carl I. Fertman. Warminster, PA: Mar-Co Products, Inc., 1443 Old York Road; (800) 448-7197.

The FOCUS, "Promoting Student Involvement in Community Service Activities," (April 1993), 20 pages. Wisconsin Association of School Boards, Policy Publication. (608) 257-2622. Outlines some considerations school district personnel may want to keep in mind when developing strategies for promoting student involvement in community service activities. Also highlights how some Wisconsin school districts are working to get students involved in their communities.

Joining Hands Community Service-Learning Resource Kits. Iowa Service-Learning Partnership, University of Iowa. These kits provide K-8 teachers with extensive resources for planning and conducting quality service-learning projects. The kits focus on six themes (environmental, intergenerational, health-safety, poverty-hunger, animals, and school community) at two levels (K-3 and 4-8). Each kit comes in a roomy zippered bag and contains a resource binder, children's literature books on the theme, and resource books. Call 800-369-IOWA.

Just Kidding: A Serious Commitment to Safe Service Opportunities for Young People. Nonprofit Risk Management Center, 1996. 100 pages. (202) 785-3891. Examines how traditional risk management processes apply to programs offering service opportunities to young people. The general risk management discussion addresses legal concerns, and special sensitive topics, such as transportation, drug abuse, juvenile offenders, and violence.

Learning through Service: Ideas from the Field. Palo Alto, CA: Service Learning 2000 Center, 1994. 24 pages. (415) 322-7271. Twenty real-life service-learning programs are described, including a 3rd-grade community garden to a 12th-grade American Democracy project. Includes an introduction to service-learning and reflections on elements of high-quality programs.

Legal Issues for Service-Learning Programs. Community Service Brief series. Nonprofit Risk Management Center, 1994. 27 pages. Contact 202/785-3891, or ask your local library to request it from the Reference and Loan Library. Covers legal liability fundamentals, injuries to students, legal limitations on service-learning, risk management, meeting obligations, and items to review with a risk manager or legal counsel.

Learn and Serve America Guidelines for Youth Service-Learning and Adult Volunteer Partnerships. Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (annual publication). (608) 266-3390. Contains guidelines and application forms for school-based service-learning mini-grants. Also includes definitions of service-learning, information on starting a program, and tips for high-quality service-learning.

Phi Delta Kappan, special section on youth service. Joe Nathan and Jim Kielsmeier, editors. (June 1991), 34 pages. National Youth Leadership Council, (651) 631-3672. Includes eight articles from national leaders in the field of service-learning.

Route to Reform: K-8 Service-Learning Curricular Idea Book. Roseville, MN: National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC), 1994. 128 pages. (651) 631-3672. This teacher-written collection of ideas offers two- to three-page summaries of ideas that have worked in settings from New Mexico to Michigan. Annotated bibliographies are included.

Route to Reform: Service-Learning and School Improvement. Roseville, MN: NYLC, 1994. Video, 20 minutes. (651) 631-3672. Explores successful service-learning

curricula at three sites: an elementary school in Washington state, a middle school in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and a high school in East Peoria, Illinois. Teachers, students, and administrators discuss the effects this teaching methodology has had on their schools and lives. From a refurbished school/community courtyard to a river project to a whole-school integration model, these sites represent some of the best practices currently underway nationwide.

Schools and Communities: Creating Places of Learning. Washington, DC: The Points of Light Foundation. 21 pages. NYLC, 1991. (612) 631-3672. The progress of school reform is discussed, along with the role of service-learning in bringing about changes.

Service Learning in the Middle School Social Studies Curriculum. Palo Alto, CA: Service Learning 2000 Center, 1993. (415) 322-7271. Contains concrete suggestions for tying service into the seventh- and eighth-grade social studies curriculum in California. Includes a literature review and an overview of service-learning.

Teaching Young Children through Service: A Practical Guide for Understanding and Practicing Service-Learning with Children Ages 4-8. Ann Shoemaker. NYLC, 1999. (651) 631-3672.

Things That Work in Community Service Learning: Volume 1. Springfield, MA: Community Service Learning Center. (413) 734-6857. An instructional manual illustrating many ways in which service-learning can be infused into secondary education. Among the subject areas covered are English, social studies, home technology, music, math, foreign language, and psychology.

The Training Toolbox: A Guide to Service-Learning Training. Baltimore, MD: Maryland Student Service Alliance. (410) 333-2427. Includes a video, a teacher training manual, a project plan book, motivational posters, and service-learning curricula for elementary, middle, and high schools as well as special education classes.

Youth Service: A Guidebook for Developing and Operating Effective Programs. Dan Conrad and Diane Hedin. Washington, DC: Independent Sector, 1987. 72 pages. (301) 490-3229. Step-by-step help and advice on how to set up a school-based service program.

Organizations

Close Up Foundation. (800) CLOSE-UP or closeup.org/servlern.htm. Close Up produces curriculum materials and provides workshops for educators in civic education, social studies and service-learning.

Corporation for National Service. (202) 606-5000 or www.cns.gov. The Corporation provides funds to states to support community service and service-learning through Learn and Serve America, VISTA, AmeriCorps, Senior Corps and other programs.

Do Something. (212) 523-1175 or dosomething.org. Do Something is a national nonprofit organization that attempts to inspire young people to make positive changes in their communities through media campaigns and a variety of awards, grants and character education and service-learning programs.

Future Problem Solving Program. (800) 256-1499 or fpsp.org. FPSP runs a competitive "Community Problem Solving" program for student teams, using their FPSP skills to address real community problems. The top Community Problem Solving Team projects are invited to the FPSP International Conference in June.

Learn and Serve America Training and Technical Assistance Exchange. (888) LSA-EXCHange, or lsaexchange.org. The Exchange provides peer-based training and technical assistance in service-learning.

National Service-Learning Clearinghouse. (800) 808-SERVe (7378) or www.nicsl.coled.umn.edu. The mission of the Clearinghouse is to provide the leadership, knowledge, and technical assistance necessary to support and sustain service-learning programs. Maintains a large database of service-learning materials accessible on the website.

National Youth Leadership Council. (651) 631-3672 or nylc.org. NYLC works to engage young people in their communities through model programs, curricula, research, training for educators and youth, and communication networks. NYLC also works to influence education reform and youth-oriented public policy.

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Service-Learning Program. (608) 266-3390 or www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dltcl/bbfcsp/slhmpage.html. The DPI makes Learn and Serve America funds available to school districts through the CESAs, and cooperates with the CESAs to provide service-learning training and technical assistance to youth and educators.

Wisconsin National and Community Service Board. (608) 261-6604 or wncsb.org. The WNCSB makes Learn and Serve America funds available to community-based organizations through the CESAs. The Board also oversees AmeriCorps programs in Wisconsin.

Appendixes

The Six Types of Family-School-Community Partnerships

A Checklist for Schools

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School Volunteer's Evaluation of Program

The Six Types of
Family-School-Community Partnerships

The Six Types

Parenting—Build on parenting strengths and help families improve parenting skills. Facilitate support systems and networks to enable families to effectively nurture their children.

Communicating—Design and implement effective two-way communication practices to reach families, both individually and collectively. These practices should ensure that families and school staff communicate back and forth about their children.

Learning at Home—Provide for families and school staff to work together in developing learning goals and offering opportunities for learning activities at home and in the community to meet the goals.

Volunteering—Recruit and organize volunteer participation from families and the community at-large.

Decision Making—Design governance structure through which parents are partners in policy decisions so that families have opportunities to give their opinions and to participate in decision making about school programs. Recruit families to act as advocates and decision makers and represent other parents and families.

Community Collaboration—Establish partnerships with individuals and organizations in the community.

**Based on the research of Joyce Epstein, co-director, Center on Families, Communities, Schools & Children's Learning, John Hopkins University. Implementation through the League of Schools Reaching Out, Institute for Responsive Education, Boston.*

Getting it Done

Leadership—Who is in charge and has the authority to organize and assign tasks? One person should be accountable for the results.

Analysis—What are the needs and challenges? What results do you want? Develop a basis for your efforts.

Planning and Policy Development—What must be done? How? Who will do it? What is the time line? School board policy and district and school procedures may need to be developed.

Action/Implementation—With the groundwork laid, how much of the plan can you put in place? While the six types of family-community participation for schools are interrelated and important for a comprehensive approach, determine what is possible and practical at any given time. Don't delay doing something because the whole plan is not in place.

Evaluation—What worked? What didn't? What needs changing or fine tuning? Listen and learn from experiences.

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A Checklist for Schools

Making Your Family-Community Partnership Work

Following are examples of practices and programs that schools and districts can use to encourage family and community support of children's learning. They are meant to be advisory and should be adapted to each school's or district's needs.

Parenting and Family Skills

- ❑ 1. We sponsor family learning workshops on topics suggested by parents, and held at times and places easily accessible to all parents.
- ❑ 2. We ask families what types of workshops or informational events they would be interested in attending and what session times are most convenient for them.
- ❑ 3. We provide families with information on child development.
- ❑ 4. We lend families books and tapes on parenting and parent workshops.
- ❑ 5. We provide families with information about developing home conditions that support school learning.
- ❑ 6. We survey parents to determine their needs, assign staff members to help address those needs, and work to link parents with community resources.
- ❑ 7. We have a family center or help parents access other resource centers in the community.
- ❑ 8. We have support groups for families with special interests and needs.
- ❑ 9. We train staff members and support them in reaching out to all families.
- ❑ 10. Other: _____

Communicating

- ❑ 1. We schedule parent-teacher-student conferences to establish student learning goals for the year.
- ❑ 2. We listen to parents tell us about their children's strengths and how they learn.
- ❑ 3. We follow the "Rule of Seven," offering at least seven different ways that parents and community members can learn about what is happening in the school and comment on it.
- ❑ 4. Teachers have ready access to telephones to communicate with parents during or after the school day.
- ❑ 5. Staff members send home positive messages about students.
- ❑ 6. We make efforts to communicate with fathers.
- ❑ 7. Staff members make home visits.
- ❑ 8. Parents know the telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of school staff members and the times teachers are available to take phone calls from parents.
- ❑ 9. We involve families in student award and recognition events.
- ❑ 10. We encourage and make provisions for staff members to communicate with parents about the child's progress several times each semester.
- ❑ 11. We communicate the school's mission and expectations for students to parents.
- ❑ 12. The school has a homework hotline or other kind of the telephone system.
- ❑ 13. We provide parents with structured ways to comment on the school's communications, for example, with mailed, phone, or take-home surveys.
- ❑ 14. We have staff members available to assist and support parents in their interactions with the school (i.e. home-school liaisons).
- 15. We send home communications about
  - ❑ student academic progress
  - ❑ meetings at school
  - ❑ how parents can be involved in student activities
  - ❑ Parent Association
  - ❑ student discipline
  - ❑ child development
  - ❑ the curriculum
  - ❑ how parents can be involved as volunteers
  - ❑ how parents can be involved in school governance
  - ❑ how parents can help with homework and encourage learning at home
  - ❑ community resources available to families
  - ❑ how parents can communicate with school staff
  - ❑ the school's philosophy of learning.
- ❑ 16. We directly speak to parents (does not include leaving messages on answering machines) if students are having academic difficulty or causing classroom disruptions **before** a crisis occurs.
- ❑ 17. We provide copies of school textbooks and publications about the school to the public library.
- ❑ 18. Other: _____

Learning at Home

- ❑ 1. We have specific goals and activities that keep parents informed about and supportive of their children's homework.
- ❑ 2. We offer learning activities and events for the whole family.
- ❑ 3. We invite parents to borrow resources from school libraries for themselves and their families.
- ❑ 4. We link parents with resources and activities in the community that promote learning.
- ❑ 5. We give parents materials they can use to evaluate their child's progress and provide feedback to teachers.
- ❑ 6. We help parents understand student assessments, including report cards and testing, and how to help students improve.
- ❑ 7. School staff and school communications help parents link home learning activities to learning in the classroom.

- ❑ 8. We include parents and other community members in developing children's learning outside of school activities.
- ❑ 9. Other: _____

Volunteering

- ❑ 1. We encourage families and other community members to volunteer their support by attending school events.
- ❑ 2. We offer youth service learning opportunities for students who want to volunteer in the community.
- ❑ 3. We help school staff learn how to work with parent and community volunteers.
- ❑ 4. We ask family members how they would like to participate as volunteers at their child's school or in the community, and we respond in a timely manner to their offers of assistance.
- 5. We encourage family and community members to become involved as
  - ❑ participants in site-based management councils
  - ❑ presenters to students on careers and other topics
  - ❑ assistants with art shows, read-aloud events, theater workshops, book swaps, and other activities
  - ❑ tutors/mentors
  - ❑ chaperones on field trips and other class outings
  - ❑ instructional assistants in classrooms, libraries, and computer labs
  - ❑ non-instructional assistants
  - ❑ from-the-home contributors of baked goods, assembling materials, typing, etc.
- ❑ 6. We offer volunteer opportunities for working and single parents.
- ❑ 7. We have a program to recognize school volunteers.
- ❑ 8. We gather information about the level and frequency of family and community participation in school programs.
- ❑ 9. Other: _____

Governance and Advocacy

- ❑ 1. We encourage parents to attend school board and site council meetings.
- ❑ 2. We assign staff members to help parents address concerns or complaints.
- ❑ 3. We invite staff and parent groups to meet collaboratively, providing space and time to do so.
- ❑ 4. We help families advocate for each other.
- 5. We involve parents in
  - ❑ revising school and district curricula
  - ❑ planning orientation programs for new families
  - ❑ developing parenting skills programs
  - ❑ establishing membership for site-based councils
  - ❑ hiring staff members.
- ❑ 6. Other: _____

Community Collaboration

- ❑ 1. We act as a source of information and referral about services available in the community for families.
- ❑ 2. We use a variety of strategies to reach out to adults, families, and children of all ages, races, and socioeconomic backgrounds in the community.
- ❑ 3. We encourage local civic and service groups to become involved in schools in a variety of ways such as mentoring students, volunteering, speaking to classes, and helping with fund-raising events.
- ❑ 4. We encourage staff and students to participate in youth service-learning opportunities.
- ❑ 5. We open our school buildings for use by the community beyond regular school hours.
- ❑ 6. We work with the local chamber of commerce or business partnership council and public library to promote adult literacy.
- ❑ 7. We have a program with local businesses that enhances student work skills.
- ❑ 8. We widely publish and disseminate school board meeting notices, summaries, and board policies and agendas, and encourage the feedback and participation of community members.
- ❑ 9. Other: _____

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Families in Education Program

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Powerful Practices

Keys to Successful School-Volunteer Programs

(Revised working draft developed by the Partners of the AASA Opening School House Doors Project, March, 2000.)

To help schools and communities to make the most of the "Powerful Practices," for successful K-12 volunteer programs, we offer the following checklist of attributes for each practice.

The checklist is a tool to assess the current status and identify ways to improve local practice. School districts and schools may identify other indicators specific to their location and community.

Review the following practices and place checkmarks in the column that best describes the *current* status of your volunteer program. You can also use this matrix to guide program development, implementation, and progress.

1 = Just Starting 2 = Moving in Right Direction 3 = We're There	1	2	3
1. Support of Leaders			
• The school board, district superintendent, and other school leaders advocate on behalf of volunteer programs within the school and community.			
• The school board encourages and supports school volunteer programs.			
• Clear policies support and guide school volunteer programs			
• The school board expects school volunteer programs to exist in each school.			
• The district budget reflects fiscal support for volunteer programs.			
2. Alignment with Mission			
• A clearly stated mission for the volunteer program aligns with district and school missions.			
• Volunteers help create a positive school climate			
• Volunteers reflect the culture of the community.			
• Volunteer resources are planned and budgeted similar to other school programs on an annual basis.			
• Volunteer program meets all local, state, and federal regulations.			
• A risk management plan is in place to support volunteer program activities consistent with the district-wide risk management plan.			
3. Coordination With Local, State, and National Volunteer Resources and Programs			
• Local community resources are identified by the volunteer program.			
• The school volunteer program develops partnerships with local community organizations and businesses.			
• The school volunteer program coordinates its activities with community leaders and/or a community council.			
• School volunteer program leaders are knowledgeable about how to access volunteers from state and national programs.			
4. A Professional Position			
• School volunteer programs are administered by a professional staff member.			
• The volunteer coordinator provides leadership, advocacy, and direction for the school volunteer program.			
• The volunteer coordinator is provided adequate resources such as office space, program support, a budget, and professional development opportunities			
• Each school building has a staff member assigned to coordinate its volunteer program and provide guidance to volunteers.			
5. Appropriate Volunteer Placement			
• Each prospective volunteer completes an application identifying interests and skills.			
• Volunteers are interviewed to explore options for placement.			
• School volunteers are assigned to placements that make use of their skills and experience.			

1 = Just Starting 2 = Moving in Right Direction 3 = We're There	1	2	3
6. Job Description, Orientation, Training • School volunteers participate in an orientation prior to beginning their work that informs them about school policy and procedures, volunteer roles, available assistance, and logistics. • A comprehensive manual is provided to each volunteer and updated on a regular basis. • Initial and periodic training is provided to each volunteer. . • Training is integrated and coordinated with district and school staff development. • School volunteers clearly understand their roles and responsibilities and to whom they report.			
7. Onsite Guidance and Support • At each site, volunteers are supervised by a teacher, other school staff member, or the building volunteer coordinator • Supervisors provide regular feedback to the volunteers and the district volunteer coordinator. Supervisors provide coaching and guidance to volunteers, including help in complying with school policies and procedures.			
8. Training and Support for Teachers and Staff Who Supervise Volunteers • Annual orientation and periodic training is held for district teachers and staff utilizing volunteers. • Incentives are provided to staff supervising volunteers. • Teachers, other staff, and students have regular opportunities to provide feedback about volunteers to their building or district volunteer coordinators.			
9. Program Design and Evaluation • Staff, volunteers, and students have regular opportunities to participate in setting goals and objectives and assessing results. • The district collects data about volunteer programs and submits an annual report to the board of education and the community. A volunteer advisory council of staff, volunteers, students, parents, and community members meets regularly to offer input and advice.			
10. Recognition • Volunteers are often recognized informally for their contributions. • Volunteers are recognized formally with the participation of staff and students. • Volunteers are recognized within the broader community. • Staff and students are recognized for their contributions to the volunteer program.			

This material is based upon work supported by the Corporation for National Service under Learn and Serve America Grant No. 97LSGVA011. Opinions or points of view expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the CNS Learn and Serve Program.

Powerful Practices—Keys to Successful Volunteer Programs was developed by a group of superintendents, principals, volunteers, service-learning coordinators, and representatives from CNS, NYLC and the American Association of School Administrators (AASA).

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Letter to Parents

Teachers can use the following letter to notify parents that their child is working with a volunteer at school. The letter should be sent home as soon as the child begins working with a volunteer.

A Note from Your Child's Teacher

Date: _____

Hello!

Today your child, _____ , worked with

_____ , a school volunteer.

They worked on these things: _____

_____

_____

_____

Here are some things you could work on at home together to help your child: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you!

Survey of Interest for Volunteers

(Sample)

You are invited! As a volunteer, you can help children learn.

Please share your time, skills, or interests with our students. You need not be experienced in teaching, just willing to share. The gift will help our students develop positive attitudes toward learning and motivate them to achieve their potential.

On the form below, please indicate how you are willing to help. We have provided a list to give you some ideas. We welcome your suggestions. This form may be returned in person or by mail to any school office. We will contact you regarding future involvement. Thank you!

Your Name

Telephone Area/No
(Daytime)
(Evening)

Address: Street/City/Zip

Names and grades of your children, if any, attending our schools

I am willing to help students by

❑ Coming to School ❑ Working from my Home ❑ No Preference

I Prefer to Work At (Name of School)

I Prefer to Work with the Following Students

❑ Elementary ❑ Middle School ❑ High School ❑ No Preference

I have the following skills to share:

- ❑ Sewing/Needlecraft
- ❑ Working with One Child
- ❑ Typing/Word Processing
- ❑ Working with a Small Group
- ❑ Making Phone Calls
- ❑ Making a Presentation to a Class
- ❑ Cutting Paper Shapes
- ❑ Installing/Designing BulletinBoards
- ❑ Working with Simple Carpentry
- ❑ Shelving/Cataloguing Books
- ❑ Filing
- ❑ Posting Flyers in the Neighborhood
- ❑ Making Posters/Banners
- ❑ Providing Childcare
- ❑ Reading Stories to Children or Listening to Them Read
- ❑ Bookkeeping
- ❑ Keeping Score at Athletic Events
- ❑ Working on Publicity
- ❑ Helping with Math or Science Skills
- ❑ Providing Transportation
- ❑ Organizing School Events or Fund-raisers
- ❑ Chaperoning Field Trips, Bus Trips, or Dances
- ❑ Writing Grants
- ❑ School Decision-Making or Advisory Committees
- ❑ Talking About Career

Other Ways I could Help

My Other Hobbies/Skills (e.g., Camping, Architecture, Swedish Cooking, Local History, Calligraphy, etc.) are

I have Access to a

❑ Computer ❑ Pickup Truck or Van ❑ Sewing Machine ❑ Video Camera

Volunteer's Emergency Information

(Sample)

Personally identifiable information collected on this form will be used to best handle any emergency medical situation that may occur. Such information will not be released without permission and will be retained only for the duration of volunteer service.

Volunteer's Name

Name of Person to contact in case of an emergency:	Telephone Area/No. *(Home)* *(Work)*
If there is no answer, call: *(Name of Relative, Neighbor, etc.)*	Telephone Area/No. *(Home)* *(Work)*
I authorize all treatment deemed advisable and suggest: *(Name of Doctor)*	Telephone Area/No. *(Home)* *(Work)*

OR, the Emergency Room at *(Hospital, Clinic, or Other)*

OR, if unavailable, any appropriate medical care deemed advisable by volunteer station authorities

❑ Yes ❑ No

Volunteer's Signature *(Cross out any of the above options you do not want)* ➢	Date

IMPORTANT

If you have any unusual health hazards such as easily bleeding, serious drug allergies, or are not to be referred to a doctor for religious reasons, put an "X" in the box and describe the situation in the space below.

I am taking medication on a continuing basis for the following conditions:

Medication	Condition

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Source: RSVP of Dane County

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Volunteer Screening Reference Letter

(Sample)

Dear _____ : _____ *(Date)*

_____ has applied for a volunteer position with the

_____ *(School/Program)*. Your name has been given as a personal reference. Please complete this form and return it in the enclosed envelope.

The program provides meaningful volunteer activities. Volunteers respond to local community needs in many human service areas throughout the area.

Volunteer position applied for: _____

1. How long have you known the applicant? _____

2. How well do you know the applicant? *(Check)*

   ❑ Very Well ❑ Well ❑ Average ❑ Little ❑ Very Little

3. Your relationship to the applicant: *(Check)* ❑ Co-worker ❑ Employer ❑ Friend

   ❑ Relative ❑ Other *(Please specify)* _____

4. In your opinion, would this person be a responsible and reliable volunteer for the applied position?

   ❑ Yes ❑ No *(Please explain)*

5. Would you recommend the applicant as a volunteer with our program? ❑ Yes ❑ No
   (Please explain)

6. Is there anything about this individual that would cause difficulty in their participation as a volunteer?
   (If so, what?)

7. *Please check the most appropriate column that best describes the applicant.*

	Usually	Sometimes	Never	Don't Know
Cooperative	❑	❑	❑	❑
Calm under stress	❑	❑	❑	❑
Patient	❑	❑	❑	❑
Well-adjusted	❑	❑	❑	❑
Confident	❑	❑	❑	❑
Personable	❑	❑	❑	❑
Able to make decisions	❑	❑	❑	❑

Reference's Signature ➢ _____ Date Signed _____

Thank you for completing this form. Please return it to (Name of School Volunteer Coordinator and School's Address)

_____

_____

Source: RSVP of Dane County

School:

Volunteer Program

Hour Log Sheet

Month:

Volunteer Name	Phone	Grade Unit	Time In & Out	Day	Date	Teacher/Program/Activity

Please sign in when entering the building. • Thank you! Your time and effort as a school volunteer are greatly appreciated. Source: Janesville School District

Volunteer's Evaluation of Short-Term School Program

(Sample)

Return to: School Volunteer Coordinator

Date of Assignment	Date Request Received
School	Teacher's or Supervisor's Name

Volunteer's Name

Volunteer's Assignment	Total Hours per Assignment

What were the strengths of the assignment?

What were the weaknesses of the assignment?

Would you accept this type of program again?	How did the children react to the program?	Did the children appear to be comfortable with you?
❑ Yes ❑ No	❑ Excellent ❑ Good ❑ Fair ❑ Poor	❑ Yes ❑ No

Additional Comments

Source: RSVP of Dane County

School Volunteer's Evaluation of Program *(Sample)*

Volunteer's Name	School

Teacher's/Supervisor's Name

1. Describe what you do as a school volunteer.

2. How would you describe your volunteer experience?
   ❑ Excellent ❑ Good ❑ Satisfactory ❑ Unsatisfactory

3. Does the teacher ask you how the students are doing? ❑ Yes ❑ No

4. Does the teacher let you know how you are doing? ❑ Yes ❑ No
   In what way?

5. Do you think you have adequate time to discuss the students and assignments with the teacher?
   ❑ Yes ❑ No *Comments:*

6. Are you regular in attendance? ❑ Always ❑ Most of the time ❑ Sometimes
   If there are problems, please describe.

7. How would you rate the relationship you have with the students?
   ❑ Excellent ❑ Good ❑ Satisfactory ❑ Unsatisfactory

8. Do you work with any of the following minorities? If so, **how many** have you helped during the year?
   _____ African American _____ American Indian _____ Asian/Pacific Islander
   _____ Bi-racial _____ Spanish/Hispanic _____ Handicapped

9. How do the teacher(s)/supervisor and student(s) show you that you are appreciated?

10. Would you like to work with the same teacher/supervisor next year? ❑ Yes ❑ No
    If not, please explain:

11. How could the staff be more helpful to you?

12. May this information be shared with your teacher/supervisor? ❑ Yes ❑ No

13. Other comments

Source: RSVP of Dane County